Hafa Adai!

SUNDAY

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Do you agree with the U.S. Labor report that further increasing the minimum wage will hurt the local economy?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Moving Solo

I was moving out of my apartment, and I was doing it alone.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING... Page 10

Concession

Republican Mitt Romney is conceding the bulk of the Northeast to rival John McCain.

NATION...Page 17

Carnival Madness

Men dressed as nuns danced down the cobblestone streets of Rio to kick off five days of carnival madness.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 20

Palacios: One project at a time on CIPs. **PAGE 3**

Coast Guard rescues downed pilot in Oahu. **PAGE 5**

'Let CUC set power rates'

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Lt. Gov. Timothy H. Villagomez, Department of Corrections Commissioner Lino Tenorio, Miriam K. Seman, widow of Vicente Seman, son Arnold K. Seman, and other family members lead the ribbon cutting for the new correctional facility, officially called the Vicente Taman Seman Memorial Building in Susupe yesterday morning. Right photo, Department of Corrections Commissioner Lino Tenorio offers a salute during the ribbon cutting ceremony for the state-of-the-art adult prison facility.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

New prison facility in Susupe finally opens

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

After a long delay, the state-of-the-art adult prison facility on a 100,000 square-foot lot in Susupe was finally opened yesterday.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Lt. Gov. Timothy H. Villagomez, judges David A. Wiseman and Ramona V. Manglona, and Department of Corrections Commissioner Lino Tenorio led the ribbon cutting for the new correctional facility, officially called the Vicente Taman Seman Memorial Building.

Miriam K. Seman, widow of Vicente Seman, and their children, grandchildren, relatives, and friends attended the ceremony.

Former Department of Public Safety commissioner Santiago Tudela, former police chief R.B. Camacho, and former congressman and police major Claudio K. Norita and many other retired police officials were also present at the ceremony.

RELATED NEWS
'Vicente Seman played a big role among inmates' PAGE 2

See RIBBON on Page 4

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has asked the Legislature to repeal a law that brought residential power rates down in October 2007 and prohibits the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. from setting rates unilaterally.

Fitial

Fitial said that Public Law 15-94 has crippled CUC's ability to pay for fuel, the price of which has quadrupled in a little over four years—from $25 per barrel in September 2003, to over $100 per barrel on Jan. 3, 2008.

See FITIAL on Page 4

Passport fees are increased, passport card now available

By JUDY D.J. ELLICH
DAILY AMERICAN STAFF WRITER

Starting last Friday, anyone obtaining a passport has to dig deeper into their pockets.

Additionally, everyone will have the option to apply for a passport book, a passport card, or both.

ON THE NET
http://travel.state.gov/passport.

Anyone can apply for the passport card after Feb. 1, but the State Department will not start distributing them until sometime in the spring.

Last year was the first time a driver's license was not enough for Americans to fly to Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean, and now anyone traveling by land or by sea, including ferries, will also need a passport.

See STATE on Page 4

Around the CNMI

'Vicente Seman played a big role among inmates'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE'
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The widow and family members of the late chief of Corrections and director of police Vicente Taman Seman yesterday thanked those behind the naming of the new adult prison facility in Susupe after Seman.

Miriam K. Seman said she is very proud that the new prison facility is named after her late husband.

"My husband played a big role among the inmates. He did not treat the inmates as prisoners," said Miriam Seman in an interview during yesterday's ribbon-cutting ceremony for the state-of-the-art modern adult prison facility.

Miriam Seman said that, for Vicente, it was a challenging job for him to rehabilitate the inmates.

"For him it was bringing the prisoners to the real world by giving them education, Bible studies and other technical type of something to keep them busy instead of just thinking that they committed a crime," she said.

Yesterday was also Miriam and Vicente's wedding anniversary.

Arnold K. Seman, one of the five children of Miriam and Vicente Seman, said their father truly deserves such recognition.

Arnold Seman said he and the family are grateful to the 14th Saipan and Northern Island Legislative Delegation, especially to Rep. David Apatang, who authored the bill naming the facility after their father.

He also mentioned former Department of Public Safety commissioner Jose Castro "for being instrumental in the dedication of this state-of-the-art correctional facility in honor of our Dad."

"One of our Dad's co-worker asked, 'Why did you choose to use the picture of him when he looks so serious? You should have chosen a picture of him wearing a hat and looking funny,'" said Arnold Seman, who is the chief of staff of Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez.

That is how he remembers his father—"a man with a steel fist, but with a great sense of humor."

In his speech, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said Vicente Seman was a military veteran who served honorably in the Vietnam conflict. When he returned to Saipan, he dedicated his career to DPS.

"It is only fitting that we now honor him today, in recognition of his public service, with the opening of this new building, consistent with Saipan Local Law 14-5," he said.

Fitial said that, as speaker of the 14th Legislature and as a member of the 14th Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation, he is very pleased to dedicate the new building to the family of Vicente Taman Seman, as governor.

"I supported the legislation naming this building after Mr. Seman in 14th Legislature and I am very, very happy to participate in this ribbon-cutting ceremony now as governor," Fitial added.

Vicente Seman served 20 years at DPS. He served as chief of Corrections then moved to DPS as director of police. He passed away on Nov. 21, 2000.

Inmate gets probation for beating up minor inmate

The Superior Court has imposed a six-month probation sentence on an inmate who assaulted a minor inmate inside the Juvenile Detention in Kagman.

Associate Judge David A. Wiseman sentenced the 18-year-old Joshua I. Martin to six months probation for assault and battery.

Wiseman said the probation should run consecutively or in addition to the terms of Martin's current incarceration or probation.

The judge ordered the defendant to pay $10 court assessment fee.

Martin pleaded guilty to assault and battery.

The case stems from an incident on Nov. 6, 2007, when the defendant picked up the minor and slammed him to the floor.

Police report showed that the boy was treated for minor injuries at the Commonwealth Health Center.

Police said the victim was about to get water at the Juvenile Detention's Housing "A" Unit when Martin tackled him, picked him up, and slammed him down.

The guards came and stopped Martin.

Police said the victim stated that the problem with Martin started when the inmates were moved from one room to another.

Apparently, the defendant had warned the victim that if he messes up his room he would be in trouble. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

BURNED CAR JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Department of Public Safety's Traffic Section officers Anthony Macaranas and Daniel Smith check on a car that was set on fire along As Perdido Road Friday morning. The incident is still under investigation.

Light timers to be installed at Garapan basketball court

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

Light timers will soon be installed at the Garapan basketball court across the Bank of Guam to ensure that the lights will be turned off at night.

According to Division of Parks & Recreations division director Tony Benavente, he pitched the idea to the Department of Public Works' Technical Division about implementing a two-hour light timer that will automatically turn the lights off at the basketball court.

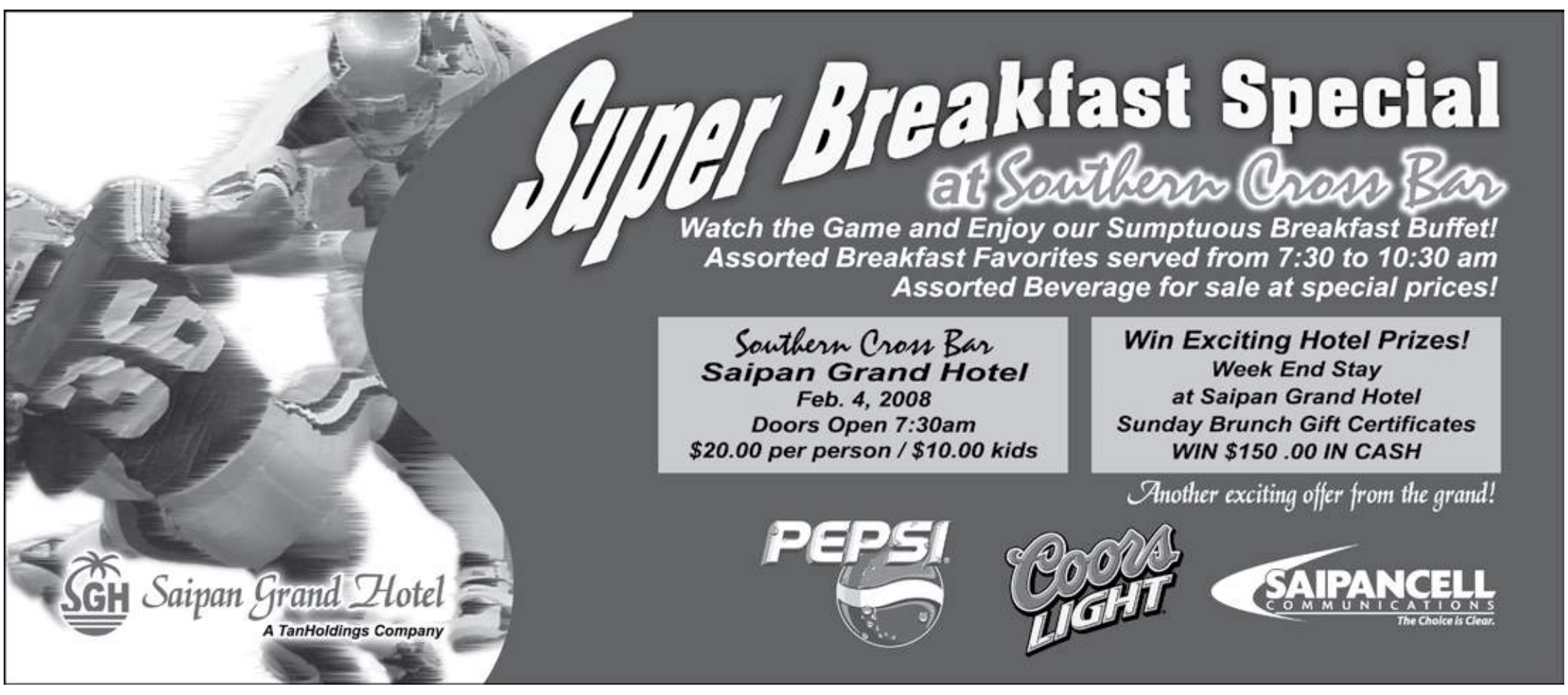
This came about after residents raised concerns as to why the lights are being left on after hours.

One concerned resident said in an e-mail, "When I drove by Garapan basketball court this morning at 8:45am, the lights were still on. This means that it has been on for at least 15 hours (6pm to 9am), so you can imagine how much power we are wasting. [This] highlights the serious problem of wasting power at all the basketball courts."

A $10,000 request bid was in the works for the Garapan basketball court renovation. However, only the bulbs will replaced at this time and not the whole renovation project because of "funding issues."

The Garapan basketball court lights have been a concern for many CNMI residents.

Benavente thanked the community's concern and is asking the help of community members to turn off the lights in basketball courts if they see them being left on.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'One project at a time on CIPs'

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios expressed outrage yesterday over the CNMI's $57.4-million backlog of federal grants for infrastructure.

Palacios said the government should rethink its infrastructure plan and consider working on projects one at a time, rather than all at the same time.

For many years, he noted, the CNMI has sought federal funds for capital improvement projects on a piecemeal basis.

A $10-million grant, for instance, would be divided to fund portions of numerous projects, with each one getting $1 million to $3 million. Often, this results in a $15-million project getting delayed for years and years and the money being left untapped.

"How about we dedicate a year's grant on one or two achievable projects and then move on to the next project when that is done? It is like when you're building a house, you don't buy a new car and acquire new property all at the same time. If you do that, you will never see that house finished," Palacios said.

He suggested that the CNMI make power infrastructure the priority. Power plant repair or a fuel farm is where all CIP funds should go at this time, he said.

"Power is the most important infrastructure. Without power, our water pumps won't run. Our wastewater treatment plants won't run. Even the airport cannot run without power," he said.

As of Thursday, Jan. 24, 2008, the CNMI had unspent balance of CIP funds amounting to $57.4 million.

'Neighborhood Watch' appointees confirmed

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The 10th Saipan and Northern Island Municipal Council has taken action to confirm appointees to the new Neighborhood Watch Task Force.

The task force, which the 9th Municipal Council established to address the increasing number of crimes on the island, has a total of six members.

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela has appointed four task force members for four different precincts: Santiago Tudela for Precinct 1; Bill Santos, Precinct 2; Danny Sablan, Precinct 3; and Manny Mangarero, Precinct 4.

The task force member representing the JROTC is Cel Damian, while Valencia Tenorio will represent the Marianas Visitors Authority.

Municipal Council chair Antonia Tudela said that the 10th council will coordinate with the Mayor's Office in scheduling the first organizational meeting of the task force.

Duties of the task force members include undertaking the necessary needs assessment, conducting studies, developing action plans, and implementing strategies in devising a permanent watch program in every precinct on Saipan.

Duties will also include distributing crime prevention and deterrence information to residents within the neighborhood and community.

Municipal Council members said that they are alarmed over reports of suspicious activities that often turn unlawful occurring in the community.

"The council is concerned that perpetrators would mistakenly perceive their potential criminal activities, if gone unchecked, as a tacit consent of their behaviors," a section of the Saipan Municipal Ordinance No. 09-01-2007 stated.

The purpose of the task force is to enhance the safety, security, and protection in the villages of Saipan, the council said.

Registration for 2nd Guam Industry Forum is ongoing

The second Guam Industry Forum has launched a new web site and registration portal to kick off its registration period. The Forum is sponsored by the Joint Guam Program Office, JGPO, and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, NAVFAC.

The Forum will provide updates on the planning and acquisition strategy efforts following the first Industry Forum held on Guam in August 2007. Anticipated topics for the March 6-8, 2008 forum include: Master planning and environmental impact statement updates; acquisition strategy and program management approaches; special purpose entities status for housing and utilities; funding profiles & relationships - government of Japan and U.S.; government of Guam issues and needs; future department of defense needs; federal involvement.

More information on the Guam Industry Forum II, the agenda, and registration forms are available on-line at www.guamindustryforum.com. Registration will close on Feb. 25, 2008. ***(PR)***

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Immigration wants overstaying houseworker deported

The Division of Immigration has sought the deportation of a houseworker who has allegedly been overstaying on Saipan for almost six years now.

Immigration investigator Nicolas T. Reyes filed a deportation case against Tessie P. Maligsa, a Filipino.

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman ordered Maligsa to appear in court on Feb. 21 at 1:30pm and explain why she should not be deported.

Reyes stated in his report that Maligsa's nonresident work entry permit expired on April 15, 2002.

Reyes said the respondent does not have any pending Labor complaint and that she was never issued a temporary work authorization.

He said Maligsa did submit a nonresident worker's application at Labor Processing Section, but the application was never approved due to a deficiency that was not complied with.

Reyes said that, on Dec. 19, 2007, he received information that Maligsa has been a long-time illegal worker staying with her two children in Koblerville.

Maligsa is allegedly afraid of being arrested by Immigration agents.

"Respondent has overstayed for about five years and nine months and has failed to comply with the requirements or condition of her entry," the investigator said. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Fitial: Repeal law that lowered power rates

From Page 1

He also said that CUC's shortfall has required the administration to reprogram substantial funds to pay the costs of power service. The cash-strapped government cannot continue to subsidize CUC.

"The law mandated power rates that are less than actual costs for serving residential customers. The shortfall poses an ongoing and severe threat to the CUC's and the CNMI's finances," he said.

Fitial said that CUC should be allowed, at least until the end of the fiscal year, to set rates without approval from the yet-to-be-formed Public Utilities Commission. He said the time period between now and Sept. 30 will allow for the submission of additional appointees to the commission and PUC's required rate order.

Public Law 15-94 took effect on Oct. 4, 2007 as a result of a legislative override of the governor's veto. The law cut the monthly customer charge from $7.67 to $3.50.

The measure scrapped the non-fuel component of power rates for residential customers who consume 1,000 kWh or less in a month's period. It also reduced the fuel component to 17.6 cents per kWh for the first 1,000 kWh.

But the 17.6-cent rate remained effective for one month only.

By November, CUC promulgated regulations that allowed CUC to charge customers for the full cost of power generation fuel. From November 2007 through January 2008, customers were charged 25.8 cents per kWh. This month, the electric fuel rate is slightly down at 25.3 cents per kWh.

Lawmakers argue that the regulations were illegal, as they changed power rates without the required PUC order.

The regulations will expire on March 1, 2008.

GRAND OPENING JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

MITA Travel owner Juan "Pan" T. Guerrero poses with SaipanCell Communications marketing representative James K. Lee and staff Ecom Park during the opening of SaipanCell Communications service outlet at MITA Travel Beach Road Garapan Friday morning.

State Department raises passport fees

From Page 1

The passport card is half the price of the passport book, and is valid for 10 years for adults and five years for children. But, unlike the book, the card is limited and may only be used for land and sea travel between the United States, Canada, Mexico, Bermuda and the Caribbean.

On Friday, the passport card, which is wallet size, is $45 for adults and $35 for anyone under the age of 16. For passport holders, a card will cost an additional $20.

For first-time applicants, it will cost $100 for adults and $85 for children under the age of 16. The fee is $3 more than last year.

To renew a passport usually costs $75, depending on whether or not it was issued in the last 15 years. The person must have the same name and must have been 16 or older when the passport was obtained. The passport book must be undamaged.

Another change in the passport requirements deals with age and consent. Two parents must consent for children under the age of 16 to obtain a passport. Last year, the age was under 14.

"This was done to protect the children from abduction and address concerns about runaway children," said Cy Ferenchak, assistant spokesman, Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State.

Parental abduction is a major concern for the State Department, especially if one of the parents has citizenship in another country, he said.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, federal legislation was passed to strengthen U.S. borders.

The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 requires the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the State Department to develop and implement a plan to require all travelers to present a passport, or other document or a combination of documents that show identity and citizenship when entering the United States.

The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative is the administrative arm of the plan to implement this mandate, Svonavec said.

Before the initiative, the office processed about 20 passports a month. That number rose to an average of 100 a month last year.

Svonavec anticipates the processing numbers to decrease this year.

"We don't foresee a rush in passports this year," she said.

The processing time is six to eight weeks, she said. At one time last year, it was taking closer to 12 weeks to process passports. With an extra expediting fee of about $60, that time can be narrowed to two weeks, she said.

The initiative's passport requirement does not apply to U.S. citizens traveling to or returning directly from a U.S. territory, Svonavec said. U.S. territories include Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Swains Island and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, according to the State Department.

NIKKO TURNOVER JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

United Micronesia Development Association's chairman of the board Jose R. Lifoifoi, UMDA's president and CEO Russell K. Snow, Jr., Japan Airlines International Co., Ltd.-vice president and associated business president Tetsuya Baba, and JAL Hotel's executive officer/BVL president Akira Yamazaki gather for a photo after closing the transfer of ownership of Hotel Nikko Saipan, Inc. to UMDA at the UMDA's corporate office at the Marina Heights Business Park in Puerto Rico Thursday morning.

Ribbon-cutting rites held for new prison

From Page 1

In his remarks, Fitial said it is gratifying to see such a large and much delayed project finally completed. He said it is also good to see such an important community need finally fulfilled.

Fitial, however, admitted that the government has not yet met all the requirements of the consent decree forged between the CNMI and the U.S. Department of Justice that led to the building's construction.

"But we are making steady progress. And today marks a major milestone on the road to a fully accomplished mission," the governor pointed out.

The consent decree mandated the construction of the new adult prison facility following DOJ's findings of deplorable conditions at the present detention building.

Fitial said that funding needs will continue to pose a challenge.

"It is not enough to simply build a modern correctional facility; now we must staff it and maintain it. And meet the mission of providing humane and effective correctional services," he said.

The governor said the government must do all these things while meeting the basic needs of other vital functions of government such as the delivery of health care, education, and public safety.

"But before we dive into the formidable challenges ahead, let us all take a moment of pride and pleasure in today's ribbon-cutting ceremony, in honor of the major task already accomplished," Fitial said. "We have a new adult correctional facility and one named in honor of a respected local policeman, correctional officer, and military veteran: the late Vicente Taman Seman."

DOC Commissioner Tenorio underscored the importance of meeting the required number of personnel to man the posts pursuant to the consent decree requirements.

Tenorio said the department is committed to providing protection for the public and crime victims by safely securing and providing a clean and healthy environment for all inmates that are under the custody of the DOC.

He said the facility is capable of housing as many 396 inmates or detainees, as there are a total of 396 bed spaces available. However, he said, it can also be expanded up to over 500 if needed.

"This number is derived from a prison population projection, which should be enough bed spaces to hold inmates over the next 15 years," he said.

Tenorio described the DOC as a "city within a city."

The facility has its own water supply through its saltwater wells. A reverse saltwater osmosis system is built as part of the facility for the purpose of producing potable product water to accommodate operational needs.

It is also equipped with an emergency backup generator, along with work stations for medical and mental health personnel, counselors and a kitchen to prepare meals.

During a tour of the facility yesterday, Saipan Tribune saw at least a full and a half basketball courts. There is also a small gym with body-building and fitness equipment.

In 2004, the Department of Public Works had said that the total project would reach $18 million or nearly $1 million than the original project cost of $17.29 million. But DOC yesterday said the total project cost was $20.9 million.

The construction began in 2002. In 2005, the government announced that the target opening date was either February or March 2006.

In August 2007, Tenorio said the administration has been working double time to finally open the facility in the next couple of months.

Tenorio then explained that the long delay was due to some contractual things needed to be in place before they can actually move in to the new facility.

Coast Guard rescues downed pilot in Oahu

HONOLULU—Oahu-based Coast Guard crews rescued a downed Hawaii Air National Guard pilot about 60 miles south of Oahu Friday at approximately 2:15pm.

Three rescue aircraft crews from Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point and crewmembers aboard the Coast Guard cutter Ahi, an 87-foot patrol boat, immediately responded to the incident, which occurred at 1:37 p.m. The Coast Guard was notified at 1:45pm concerning the distress.

A crewmember aboard one of the rescue helicopters hoisted the pilot and transferred him to The Queen's Medical Center at approximately 3pm. The pilot was reported to be in good condition.

Crewmembers from the cutter *Ahi*, the cutter *Kukui*, a 225-foot buoy tender, and Coast Guard aircraft crews stayed on scene to check for pollution and debris.

A Coast Guard rescue crew hoist a downed F-15 Hawaii Air National Guard pilot approximately 60 miles south of Oahu at 1:45 p.m. Friday Feb. 1, 2008. Several rescue aircraft crews from Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point and crewmembers aboard the Coast Guard cutter Ahi, an 87-foot patrol boat, immediately responded to the incident, which occurred at 1:37 p.m.

AIR STATION BARBERS POINT, U.S. COAST GUARD

Korean investors visit Saipan

The Ladera International School of Saipan recently hosted a group of investors to the island of Saipan. These investors, mostly from the educational field, shared a moment of enjoyment on the island.

"The investment is targeted toward enhancing the Ladera International School of Saipan grounds to better facilitate the schools growth in the CNMI," said LISS president Yong-Nam Park. "We see ourselves providing more opportunities to the community on high academic standards as well a facility that will enhance our natural ambience and our growing interest from the community and abroad."

While on island, the group was able to see what is offered for enjoyment— from a variety of sporting activities to the historical. "We are grateful for Ladera International School of Saipan as they envisioned opportunities beyond the norm, they are true patriots as they decided to establish their business abroad and enhance opportunities for all," said an investor from the group.

The group met with the Marianas Visitors Authority during their stay. MVA managing director Perry Tenorio extended his appreciation to Ladera International School of Saipan, the pioneers in the islands' edu-tourism market, for coordinating the familiarization tour. He added that the demand for overseas study is steadily growing and the MVA looks forward to working with LISS and its partnership in Korea to expand the edu-tourism market for the CNMI.

"We are grateful for the support we received from the government as well the private businesses we engaged in for this investor visit. We expect a few more investors to come in the next month and hope to receive the same treatment extended to this opportunity for the CNMI," said LISS director Wayne Pangelinan.

The investors were supported and welcomed by the Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan Grand Hotel, Joanna's transportation services, Dan Dan Elementary School, Tao Tao Marine Sports, Lao Lao Bay Golf Resort, Aqua Resort Club, DFS Saipan, and the Saipan World Resort. ***(LISS)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The group of Korean investors pose at the LISS Compound after viewing the school and its facilities.

COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
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Email: administration@cda.gov.mp • Website: www.cda.gov.mp

PUBLIC NOTICE

February 3, 2008

PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 8-41, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CDA) THRU ITS ACTING CHAIRMAN HEREBY INFORMS THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE CDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL HOLD ITS REGULAR MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2008 AT 10:00 A.M. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE CDA CONFERENCE ROOM, SECOND FLOOR, WAKIN'S BUILDING, CHALAN PALE ARNOLD ROAD, SAIPAN. THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING IS AS FOLLOWS:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
1. Roll Call
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Adoption of Minutes- January 9, 2008

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. REPORTS
1. Financial Report – CDA

IV. DIVISIONS/COMMITTEES
1. Development Corporation Division (DCD)
   a. Foreclosed Properties - Update
2. DBD/Public Finance Committee
   a. Status of the DBD Funds
3. Administrative Matters/Personnel & Budget Committee
   a. Administration's Report
   b. Executive Director
4. QC Program/Economic Development Activities Committee
   a. Compliance Issues

V. OLD BUSINESS
1. Sunset Villa
2. Pacific Gardenia Hotel
3. Sablan Enterprises
4. Saipan Health Corporation (SHC)
5. Membership-ADFIAP

VI. NEW BUSINESS

VII. OTHER MATTERS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session)

/s/ PEDRO I. ITIBUS
Acting Chairman, CDA Board of Directors

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER
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EDITORIAL

What's the beef?

This month, the Food and Drug Administration finally released its long-awaited, 968-page, hundreds-of-studies-deep, thousands-of-data-points-thick final assessment of the safety of products from cloned animals. It declared that products from cloned cattle, swine and goats and their progeny are no different from products from their conventionally bred counterparts.

The conclusions should have surprised few. Draft report after draft report and study after study have said the same thing: Food from cloned animals is safe. Each time similar results were declared , though, pleas from consumer groups and politicians prevented the FDA from finalizing its verdict on "frankenfoods."

The continued outcry and flimsy arguments that have greeted this thorough and transparent risk assessment show that part of the public still isn't ready for these findings. To avoid a misinformed backlash against the U.S. meat industry, the Agriculture Department has called for a continuation of the voluntary moratorium against putting clonal animal products on the market. In all likelihood, the moratorium isn't necessary, given that cloned animals are so expensive—often costing around 15 times what naturally bred animals cost—that they'll continue to be used for breeding instead of hamburger.

USDA officials have been cryptic about how long they expect it to take for domestic and foreign consumers to feel comfortable eating clonal animal products. Bruce Knight, the Agriculture Department's undersecretary for marketing and regulatory programs, said that it will probably take "months" before the market is ready. He declined to reveal what the department's plans are for aiding the industry's "transition," or when it will announce a timeline or strategy for this transition. USDA officials have said that they have ruled out conducting more studies, because the resistance to products from cloned animals is more visceral than scientific.

Public awareness campaigns would probably be a good start. One oft-cited proposal for reassuring the public—mandatory labeling of clonal products—would probably only cause more misapprehension about their safety. But that doesn't mean that regulators should rule out voluntary labeling. Some in the cloning industry have proposed a "supply-chain management program," which would track cloned animals through the food chain and allow companies that choose not to sell clonal food products to verifiably label themselves as such. The USDA would be a good candidate for overseeing such a program, just as it oversees labeling claims regarding organic foods. But the department's main focus should be on informing the public about the established scientific facts regarding cloned animals—and discrediting those who continue to sow groundless fear.

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Entering Sector D

By HENRY ALLEN
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

There's something about the word "disembowel." Or "depravity," or "disfigurement"—about so many words that begin with the letter "d." Divorce, destitution, doubt, drugs, dirt, dwindle. So many of them are on our lips just now—though not "disembowel," and we should be thankful for that much. Once more, as a nation, we have entered Sector D.

As in: debacle, depression, debt and debauchery.

Which is to say: mission unaccomplished in Iraq, world stock markets on tumble-dry, subprime mortgages imploding, Britney Spears.

People watch their houses plummet in value and say: "We'll just have to make do."

Do. D. Do as in doom, which is mood spelled backward, as in the national mood that dotes on rising global temperatures, falling test scores, and death from diseases such as mutant tuberculosis strewn across the continent by defiant airplane passengers.

Dyslexia. Dementia. Dysfunction.

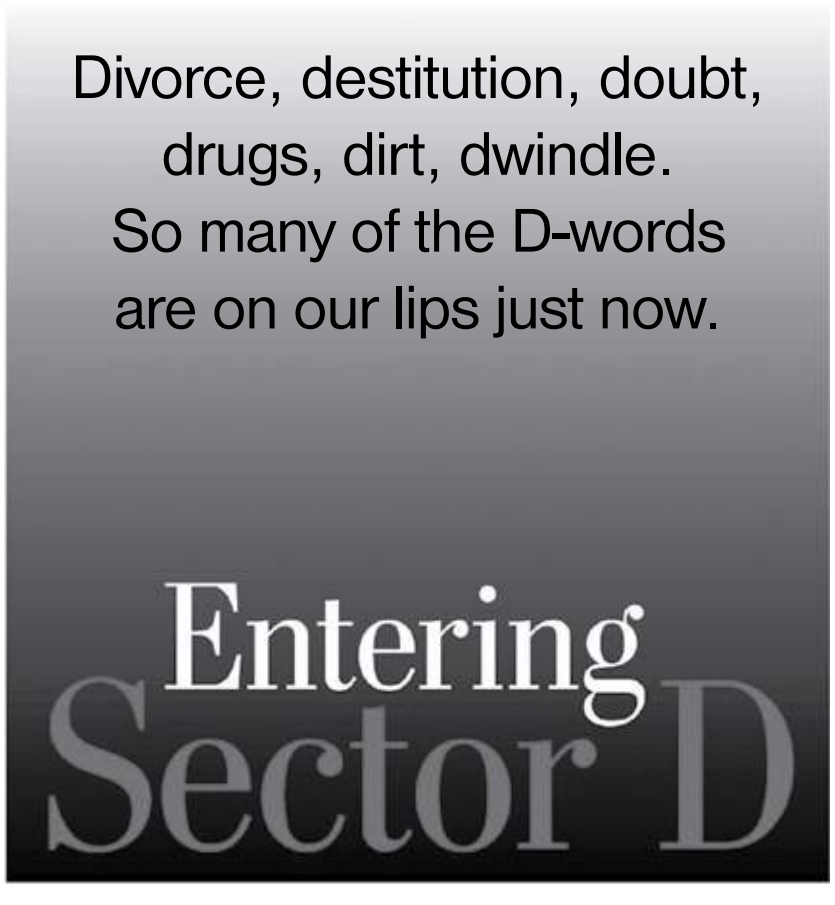
Our leaders have a new motto: Defeat is not an option. If it isn't, why do they keep saying it all the time? Distraught Democrats dread demagoguery and decline.

If the '70s were the Me Decade, this one, the Zeros, has been the D Decade ever since the 9/11 terrorists demolished the World Trade Center.

Dearth. Disgrace. Dirt.

This keeps happening. As a nation, we veer like bad drunks from triumphalism to despair. Maybe it's an American thing. In the 1830s, Alexis de Tocqueville spotted Sector D but didn't know what to call it when he said of even our upper classes that "a cloud habitually hung on their brow, and they seemed serious and almost sad even in their pleasures." Henry David Thoreau was the genius who discovered Sector D when he said: "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation."

When Franklin Roosevelt said we had "nothing to fear but fear itself" and Jimmy Carter decried a national "malaise," they were talking about Sector D.



Depressed, doleful, daunted.

Sector D is a neighborhood in the American mind, the psychic equivalent of the neighborhood you find yourself lost in after getting off at the wrong exit on the New Jersey Turnpike, a winter neighborhood strewn with broken glass, and packs of dogs circling your car as you struggle to fix a flat tire on a dead-end street while derelicts glare at you over a barrel fire and darkness descends.

Sector D can also be found in the very best neighborhoods. You know that house with that perfect family with all the dogs and ski racks and those golden children who have perfect scores on their SATs and then the parents divorce and the kids end up kicking drug habits in rehab and writing memoirs about incest? Released from their envy, their neighbors indulge in another of the Seven Deadly Sins, pride, by describing the family as "dysfunctional."

The hymn "Abide With Me" was written for those who find themselves in such neighborhoods, metaphorical or real. Come on, sing along, you know the words: "Life's little day ... Earth's joys grow dim ... change and decay in all around I see ..."

Sector D in our schools: passing, but just barely. The next grade down is F. We will not discuss Sector F.

Day of Judgment, deadlock, drunk driving, default. But thankfully, not disembowelment.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

'Building partnerships'

Editor's Note: The following is the official text of the speech that Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo delivered during her Congressional Address to the 29th Guam Legislature on Jan. 31, 2008.

Last of a two-part series

By MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Madeleine Z. Bordallo is the Guam representative to the 110th U.S. Congress.

It is critical for us to work closely with our federal counterparts to ensure that Guam is prepared to take advantage of the opportunities within our reach. For example, one major concern is the capacity of our commercial port. We need to look at ways of partnering with the federal agencies and the carriers to expand our port capacity. I am working with Governor Camacho, Senator James Espaldon, the Joint Guam Program Office and the Maritime Administration to develop a strategy to improve the port's capacity. This strategy will be a model of partnering that can be extended to other areas.

Additionally, I am working with the Armed Services Committee and the Navy to address the issue of water resources on Guam. Beyond the issue of water rates, we want to address water production and distribution in a more logical manner. It is my vision that one day our community will benefit from an integrated water utility system, where the Navy would be a customer and where all of us will benefit from increased efficiencies.

I am working with Chairman Ike Skelton and Chairman Solomon Ortiz of the Armed Services Committee, as well as Chairman Nick Rahall and Chairwoman Donna Christensen of the Natural Resources Committee, to enhance Congressional oversight of the military build-up. Congress held an oversight hearing on Guam in August, the first such hearing in over two decades, to receive community testimony on the impacts of the build-up. Following the hearing, Chairman Skelton visited Guam, and in his speech to the Industry Forum, he stated that this build-up, in order to be successful, must be good for Guam as well as our nation.

The Armed Services Committee will exercise oversight of the funds to be appropriated by Congress and the funds that will be received from Japan for construction of housing and infrastructure on Guam. We must ensure that local labor sources are tapped before looking to foreign workers. To develop our local workforce, we have provided additional resources to the Guam Community College for its training programs and I commend GCC and the Guam Contractors Association and their partners for ramping up apprenticeship programs.

Concerns expressed by our local leaders about the Japanese funding commitments through special purpose entities are shared by leaders in Congress. We will continue to encourage the Bush Administration to be responsive to the needs of our community in their discussions with Japan so that infrastructure outside the gates is also addressed. And I request that Consul General Tamio Tomino convey to his government our hope that we will have progress in this area for the benefit of our people.

It is time for the partnership between the Government of Guam and the federal government to be enhanced. This means making joint efforts to identify critical gaps in infrastructure including roads, water, wastewater, solid waste and power requirements. There are ongoing discussions between the Joint Guam Program Office (JGPO), the Interagency Group on Insular Areas (IGIA), and the Government of Guam. These discussions need concrete results. I call for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between federal agencies and the Government of Guam so that we will have a commitment of future federal resources from the Bush Administration that can be honored by a future administration. Unless our needs are included in the President's budget request to Congress, it is very difficult for Congress to add-on these projects in the current budget climate. As you may have seen in the national media, many politicians, particularly the President, attack Congressional add-ons as "earmarks" or as "pork" simply because his Administration did not request it. In fact on Monday the President issued an Executive Order instructing agencies to ignore future earmarks. It is therefore important for the Government of Guam to partner with federal agencies so that our projects are programmed into the President's budget request.

The Joint Guam Program Office is slated to publicly release an initial draft of its master plan in March. The most important document, the draft Environmental Impact Statement is on track to be completed in a year, by January 2009. These will be significant steps. We look forward to these studies as well as to the Government of Guam's own master plan.

I am confident that our leaders, including the Governor, our senators, and our mayors are up to the task of ensuring that Guam keeps pace in the years ahead to make this build-up successful. We all want the build-up to be accomplished in an environmentally sensitive and socially responsible manner. The Mayors are working every day to ensure that on a community level, good relationships are formed with the military units that participate in the sister village programs. Mayor Melissa Savares of Dededo, who is the mayor of the largest village and the village that will be a neighbor to the Marines, has shown how good community relations with the military are effectively nurtured. It is the Mayors and Vice Mayors who will have the greatest impact in making this move positive for our community. Mayor Roke Blas and Vice Mayor Robert Hoffman have instituted a Chamorro cultural program that is a great model for cultural preservation. The new President of the Mayors Council, Mayor Pedo Terlaje, whose own village of Yona has formed bonds with the 3rd Marine Division Association, will have a key role in helping the Marines to appreciate our people and our culture and these efforts will help to make the transition to Guam positive. These types of partnerships reaching down to the village level will determine to a large degree our success in achieving our goals.

> "The Armed Services Committee will exercise oversight of the funds to be appropriated by Congress and the funds that will be received from Japan for construction of housing and infrastructure on Guam. We must ensure that local labor sources are tapped before looking to foreign workers."

We have already seen a significant increase in military construction over the past five years, from $74 million in Fiscal Year 2003, to $290 million in Fiscal Year 2008. These funds circulate in our economy and have contributed to our economic rebound. The military construction funds planned for Guam in the years ahead are sure to keep our economy growing, providing jobs for our people well into the future.

Our small businesses are preparing for the opportunities that the build-up will bring. Since my amendment in 2005 extended the Historically Underutilized Business Zone program, "HUBZones," to our entire island, over 142 small businesses are now better positioned to compete for federal contracts.

We have a home-grown innovator who is changing the way we perceive the solution to affordable housing on Guam. Carlos Camacho and his non-profit Micronesia Self-Help Corporation are meeting the low and middle income housing needs of our community. Carlos has leveraged financing through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, made possible by my legislation which was enacted in 2004, to build 100 housing units in Dededo called Ironwood Estates and he has begun construction on another 100 homes. These single family homes have central air conditioning, landscaping and a community center. Carlos, please stand so that we can recognize you for your excellent work.

Partnerships with federal agencies are making a difference all around us. The Northern Community Health Center completed its $1.5 million renovation and the Guam National Guard completed its $4.9 million facility for its Civil Support Team. We are moving forward to build a $5.4 million Community Based Outpatient Clinic for our veterans.

To stimulate the economy, the President and the Congress are working on plan to provide tax rebates and investment incentives. The House passed legislation this week that provides for federal treasury reimbursement of tax rebates that are to be paid to individuals and families on Guam. Individuals will be eligible for up to $600 in tax rebates and families will be eligible for up to $1,200 in rebates as well as $300 per child. We will work with the Senate Finance Committee to preserve the reimbursements to the Government of Guam for these rebates.

On the legislative front, I will work to ensure that Guam receives its fair share of federal funding for education. Congress continues its work towards reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, which is important to the University of Guam, and this year, will also be taking up the No Child Left Behind Act. Recently Congress directed the minting of a Guam quarter, which along with the Guam stamp issued last summer, brings added attention to our island. I am also working with local advocates to help move legislation to address radiation exposure issues. On these and many other issues, I continue to work with our local leaders and individual citizens on the issues important to our community and I look forward to another year of successful partnerships.

It has been my honor tonight to report to the people of Guam on the many initiatives we are doing on their behalf. As I mentioned earlier, tonight is an especially significant night for me, as it is the anniversary of the passing of my husband, Governor Ricky Bordallo. I learned about public service and dedication from Ricky. I never imagined when I first married him that life would take me down this road. As many of you know, I was a music major in college and I was all set for a very different career path. Well, being married to Ricky meant following a dream and it was my pleasure to be his partner in life and to help him fulfill his vision of what Guam could be. Many of you also had your start with Ricky as your inspiration, and as I look around this Hall, I see familiar faces of those who once served with Governor Bordallo and who have risen to become Senators, Judges, community leaders and successful businessmen and women. Ricky would be proud of all of you. He used to take such pleasure in bringing in new energy to his administration and he gave many of you your first real job.

In closing, I want you to know that it is my deepest honor to serve the people of Guam in this capacity as Guam's Delegate to Congress. I recently finished reading a novel titled, *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*. Its premise is that we are all connected in ways we would never imagine. We will learn in the afterlife how one's life has influenced another, and how we all determine what our heaven will be. I have reflected on what my heaven will be. It will be reuniting with Ricky and all our loved ones who have preceded us. And my heaven will be Ricky and I serving the people of Guam as we have so loved to do.

I thank you for giving me this opportunity to serve you.

Dangkulo na si Yu'os ma'ase, *maraming salamat po*, thank you, God bless Guam and God bless our great nation, the United States of America.

Letter to the Editor

'Pass anti-animal cruelty law'

To Senate President Pete Reyes:

My name is Aprilleen Sablan. I am in 6th grade. I attend school at William S. Reyes. My homeroom teacher is Ms. Phyllis Ain. I am writing to you because I think the CNMI Legislature should pass the Anti- Animal Cruelty Law because the people of the CNMI aren't treating animals the way they should be treated. Most of the villages I go to, I see abandoned animals, animals with diseases and that isn't right. This law will prevent animals from being neglected, abandoned, and injured.

A few nights ago you said that you weren't going to pass the law because the CNMI has a budget. It doesn't really matter if the CNMI has a budget or not. The law wouldn't need that much money. If you pass this law the CNMI would be a better place. There wouldn't be any neglected or injured animals. The CNMI would be an even more beautiful place. Now the CNMI isn't that beautiful because there are animals going around with diseases and animals that are injured, and that might scare away the tourists. The CNMI Legislature wants more tourists to come to the islands, right? So I think the Legislature should pass the Law. I hope you and the rest of the representatives pass this law. Thank you for your time.

Aprilleen Sablan
William S. Reyes Elementary School

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼75°	▲85° ▼75°	▲84° ▼76°	▲83° ▼76°	▲84° ▼75°

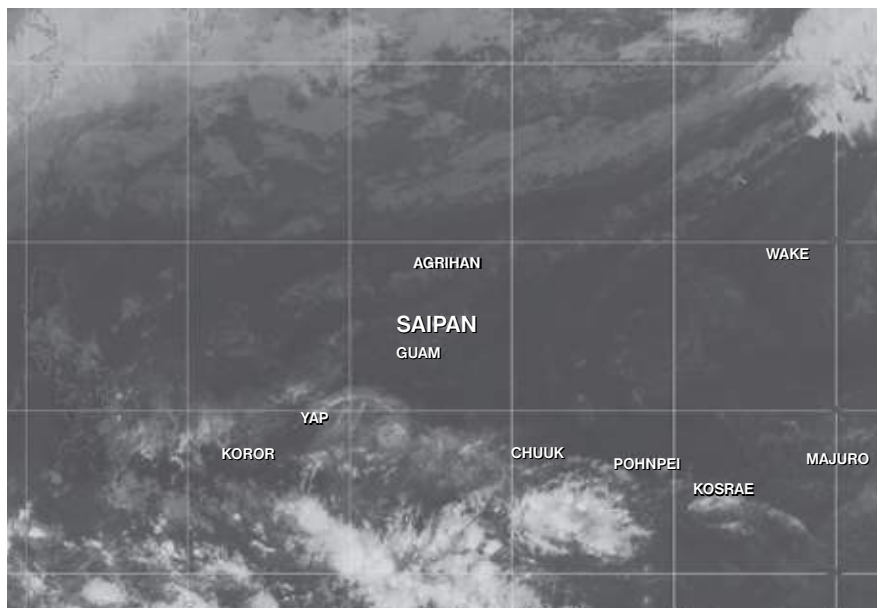
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼78
Palau	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Yap	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Chuuk	Cloudy	▲90	▼80
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼77
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲88	▼77
Majuro	Cloudy	▲84	▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲75	▼66
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲34	▼16
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲55	▼50
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲80	▼68
London	Rain	▲43	▼37
Los Angeles	Rain	▲60	▼45
Manila	Cloudy	▲87	▼74
Melbourne	Showers	▲74	▼59
Miami	Partly Sunny	▲81	▼70
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲47	▼37
Osaka	Rain	▲45	▼33
Paris	Cloudy	▲39	▼37
Pusan	Cloudy	▲48	▼22
Rome	Cloudy	▲56	▼43
Salem	Rain	▲43	▼34
San Francisco	Rain	▲54	▼40
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲36	▼17
Tokyo	Rain	▲43	▼32
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲55	▼41

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SATURDAY, FEB. 2, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front stretches southwestward from 25N162E to 22N152E, and continues as a shear line to 18N128E. Extensive cloudiness and scattered showers are found along and up to 200 miles north of this boundary from 25N162E to 20N135E. An old shear line reaches southwestward from 25N165E across Anatahan near 16N147E to 11N130E and beyond. Patchy clouds and scattered showers are observed along and up to 100 miles northwest of this boundary from 25N165E to 21N158E. A near-equatorial trough runs southeastward from 3N130E to EQ140E. Low-level convergence along the eastern portion of the trough axis is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms southeast of Palau within 50 miles of a line from 5N137E to 1N140E, and within 90 miles of a line from 1N140E to 2N149E. A trade-wind disturbance is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Chuuk between 2N and 5N from 150E to 157E. A surface trough extends northeastward from EQ175E to 7N177E. Scattered showers associated with this trough can be seen from south of Majuro to the dateline within 100 miles of a line from EQ167E to 4N172E to 8N180.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

6:54AM Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
11:22AM Today	Low Tide:	1.4 Feet
3:57PM Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
11:55PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:46AM	6:16PM
Monday	6:46AM	6:16PM
Tuesday	6:45AM	6:17PM
Wednesday	6:45AM	6:17PM
Thursday	6:45AM	6:17PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:24AM	2:40PM
Monday	4:16AM	3:35PM
Tuesday	5:07AM	4:32PM
Wednesday	5:55AM	5:28PM
Thursday	6:39AM	6:24PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

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- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 2, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 078	8:25am	1:30pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:50pm	7:30pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
NW 083	4:30pm	7:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:25am	11:05am	Daily
Saipan-Manila			
CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3
Saipan-Seoul			
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	4:00am	7:35am	1,4,5,7
Saipan-Guanzhou			
CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6
Saipan-Shanghai			
MU 590	4:20am	7:00am	2,6
Saipan-Beijing			
CA 988	3:15am	7:00am	1,5
Guam-Manila			
CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2,7
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7
Guam-Hongkong			
CO 909	7:45pm	10:40pm	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:35am	3:05pm	Daily
NW 077	6:15pm	1:10am+1	Daily via Nagoya
Osaka-Saipan			
NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily
Manila-Saipan			
CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3
Seoul-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7
Guanzhou-Saipan			
CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5
Shanghai-Saipan			
MU 589	8:05pm	3:00am+1	1,5
Beijing-Saipan			
CA 987	6:05pm	1:55am+1	4,7
Manila-Guam			
CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2,7
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	5:25am+1	3 via Koror
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Hongkong-Guam			
CO 910	11:40pm	6:20am+1	1,5
Rota-Guam			
CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

(Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana. ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Thursday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal
9:00 AM Family Worship
3:00 PM Choir Rehearsal
Wednesdays at Parsonage
7:00 PM Prayer, Share and Care

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church (Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio
Sunday
9am Sunday school
10am Regular worship
6pm worship
Wednesday
7pm worship
Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

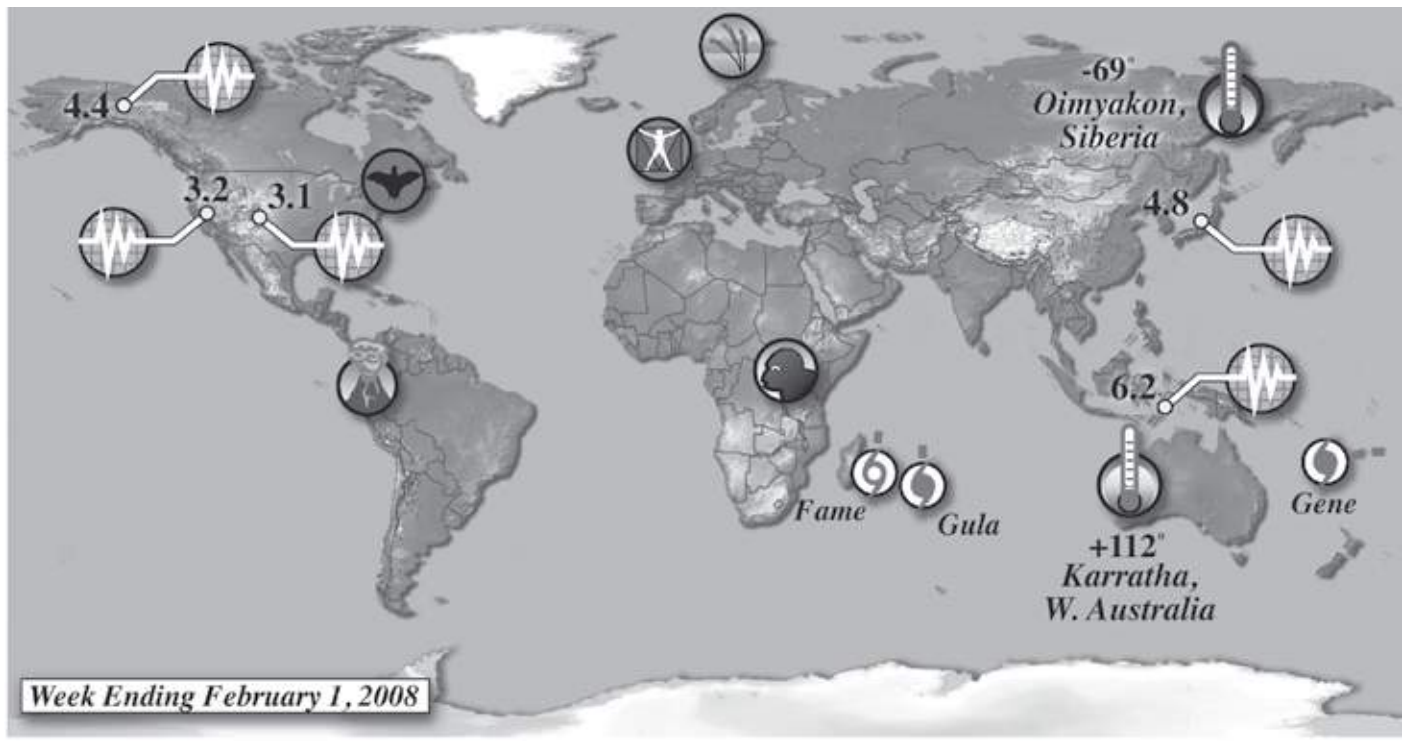
Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon
English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Earthweek: A Diary of the Planet

By STEVE NEWMAN



End of an Epoch

The impact humans have had on the surface of the planet has become so expansive that scientists say Earth has entered a new epoch —the Anthropocene. Jan Zalasiewicz and Mark Williams at the University of Leicester, and their colleagues on the Stratigraphy Commission of the Geological Society of London, analyzed a proposal made by Nobel Prize-winning chemist Paul Crutzen in 2000 that suggested the world has left the Holocene because of the global environmental effects of increased human population and economic development. They factored in transformed patterns of sediment, disruptions to the carbon cycle and wholesale changes to the world's plants and animals. The team argues that the dominance of humans has so physically changed the planetary landscape that post-industrialized Earth can no longer be considered still in the Holocene epoch. Duke University soil scientist Daniel Richter wrote in the journal Soil Science that more than half of all soils on Earth are now being cultivated for food crops, grazed or periodically logged for wood.

Tropical Cyclones

At least seven people were left dead in the wake of Cyclone Gene, which inflicted significant damage on Fiji's main island of Viti Levu. Winds of up to 93 mph downed power lines, plunging the capital of Suva and other communities into darkness. Flash flooding forced thousands into evacuation centers. The storm took aim at Vanuatu late in the week.

■ Cyclone Gula brought heavy rainfall to Mauritius as it passed just east of the Indian Ocean island. Cyclone Fame moved southward between Reunion and Madagascar.

Mysterious Bat Deaths

Bats hibernating in the caves and mines of the northeastern United States are dying off by the thousands due to a mysterious condition being called "white nose syndrome." The name refers to the white circles of fungus that have been found around the noses of affected bats. Deaths were first discovered in caves of eastern New York in January 2007. Since then, between 8,000 and 11,000 have died in the largest die-off of bats due to disease documented in North America. The disease has now spread to eight sites in New York and another in neighboring Vermont. Conservation groups have urged the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ban the public from all bat hibernation sites to prevent the illness from being spread. "We do not know how the disease is transmitted and whether there are any potential effects on humans," said Vermont wildlife biologist Scott Darling. Bats are particularly vulnerable when they hibernate because they can hang together tightly by the thousands.

Cross-Primate Infection

Scientists studying possible health threats to great apes from such activities as research and ecotourism have found the first direct evidence that viral diseases in humans can be passed on to the wild primates. Previous studies had demonstrated the spread of only mild bacterial and parasitic infections from humans to wild apes. "We need to be much more proactive about instituting strict hygiene precautions at all ape tourism and research sites," said wildlife disease epidemiologist Fabian Leendertz. The study also showed that research and tourism projects greatly decreased the level of poaching of chimpanzees.

Eruptive Attraction

Ecuador's Tungurahua volcano produced several blasts that extended the mountain's current eruptive phase, which began on Jan. 5. While eruptions there in 2006 killed six people and destroyed thousands of acres of crops, the latest explosions have attracted a large number of tourists rather than scaring them away, according to local officials.

Earthquakes

A 6.2 magnitude quake centered in eastern Indonesia's Maluku province jolted several islands and prompted seismologists to issue a brief tsunami warning.

■ Earth movements were also felt in western Japan, the northern Yukon Territory, southern Colorado and around Lake Tahoe.

Seed Bank Deposit

Seeds from more than 200,000 varieties of crops from Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America have just been placed in a storage facility on a remote island near the Arctic Circle, where they will be stored in case a manmade or natural disaster destroys agriculture. Various types of rice, wheat, beans, sorghum, sweet potatoes, lentils, chick peas and a host of other plants will be stored at the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, which is capable of preserving their vitality for thousands of years. The doomsday vault, built by Norway as a service to the global community, will officially open on Feb. 26. The facility is designed to be able to replenish other gene banks around the world if they are hit by catastrophe.

Distributed by: Universal Press Syndicate
www.earthweek.com
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OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Women teach suspects a very hard lesson

MARYLAND HEIGHTS, Mo. (AP)—It looks like a couple of suburban St. Louis purse snatchers picked the wrong women to attack. The victims fought back - with a snow shovel. Police in Maryland Heights released details of the Sunday incident outside a Schnucks grocery store. The women were unloading groceries when the thieves tried to steal two purses from their cart. One of the women grabbed a shovel from the suspects' pickup and smacked one of the men upside the head. The other woman jumped into the cab and attacked the other suspect, then grabbed the keys so he couldn't drive away. Police tracked the men to a hotel. The man struck with the shovel required staples to close the gash in his head. Both are jailed and charged with robbery.

What a nasty letter for a $16.96 debt!

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP)—A collection agency tried to collect a $16.96 debt with an letter that addressed its recipient with a four-letter word for excrement. "Dear S---," began the letter attempting to collect from an old record club membership. The word was spelled out in the letter, which arrived in an envelope addressed to "S--- Face." "I've never seen anything quite so brazen," said attorney Kenneth Hiller. He said his client plans to sue Nationwide Collections Inc. of Fort Pierce, Fla., next week. Under U.S. law, debt collectors are not allowed to use profanity to collect a debt, Hiller said, nor are they supposed to threaten legal action over such a small amount. Nationwide President Phillip McGarvey said the October 2007 letter was automatically generated after his company bought about 350,000 Columbia House accounts. "S--- Face" is the name under which the account was opened and the way the coupon to start the club was filled out, he said. Hiller's client has signed an affidavit saying he never signed up for the music club membership under that name. "It looks bad to the observer who is not familiar with the industry," acknowledged McGarvey, "but anybody who understands the volume would understand how this could happen. ...You've also got people filling in famous people's names."

Good Housekeeping

The smart way to move solo

By JULIA FELDMEIER
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

When you're backed into a corner, face pressed against an old box spring that you've decided to haul down the stairs single-handedly, it's not really the time to reflect on intelligence. Yet there I was, trapped on the landing between the third and fourth floors of my apartment building, suddenly thinking of myself as less Herculean and more stupid. I was moving out of my apartment, and I was doing it alone.

The DIY move is a rite of passage for many in their 20s. Our one-man show often debuts this time of year. It's the college senior who's first to return to campus. Or the graduate unloading in a new city. Or, like me, it's someone who has plenty of local contacts but is too proud (read: disorganized) to ask for help.

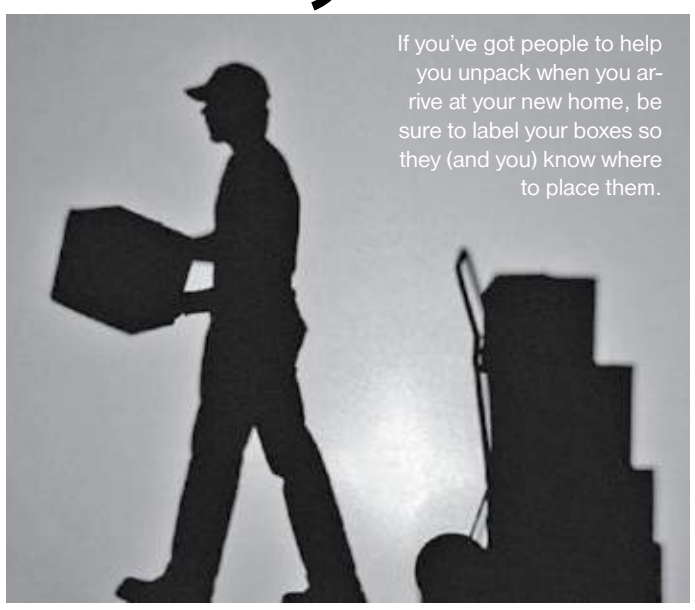
I finally got that box spring unstuck and, 11 hours later, my car was loaded and bulging like my newly grown muscles. My apartment was empty, and my mind was buzzing with all the tips I wanted to remember for the next time—ways in which I might be a little smarter about moving.

LABEL AND CATEGORIZE.

If you've got people to help you unpack when you arrive at your new home, be sure to label your boxes so they (and you) know where to place them. Nancy Loyd, co-owner of Busy Buddies, a local unpacking service, recommends loading your kitchen boxes last so they're the first to come off. That way, you can have your friends start unpacking the kitchen items while you're unloading the rest of the boxes. Just before the kitchen boxes, load your bedroom stuff. Even if the rest of the house is in disarray, having your kitchen and bedroom finished makes the place livable. Plus, Loyd says, "if your bed is all set up, you have a place to crash when you finish unloading."

PACK CLEANING SUPPLIES LAST.

This applies not only to items you'll need so you can clean your place before you leave, but also to toiletries for yourself. After hours of moving, I was sweaty, dirty and desperate for a shower—but I'd already cleared my shampoo, soaps and towel out of my bathroom. Consider packing those items at the end so you can feel clean and fresh before you hit the road. It's only fitting, after all, as you head out for a fresh start.



If you've got people to help you unpack when you arrive at your new home, be sure to label your boxes so they (and you) know where to place them.

PACK SMART.

One of the (few) advantages to procrastinating is that I hadn't gotten around to donating old clothes. This came in handy when I realized I had no bubble wrap or packing materials to cushion fragile items: I used old T-shirts to wrap lamps, glasses and other breakables. I also removed the drawers from my dresser and carried them down separately; just remember to put them back in place when you load the truck. Drawers help stabilize the chest, which is especially important with less-sturdy furniture. Allan Torres, manager of Gulliver's Movers' Alexandria, Va., office, recommends using three different-size boxes (the smallest for books, and medium and large ones for clothing and dishes). And if you have particularly heavy items that require wheels to move, consider renting a hand truck or dolly. U-Haul rents utility and furniture dollies for $7 to $10.

BE DILIGENT ABOUT SELLING STUFF.

Ever seen the ads on Craigslist that say, "MOVING: MUST SELL!"? Translation: desperation. If you're hoping to get some cash for items you're getting rid of, post often so your ad will appear near the top of the page. I tried to sell my couch but never updated my post and ended up giving it away. I was sorry to lose the money, but by day's end, standing idle while watching someone else move my furniture felt, well, priceless.

Ideas to steal: Table for 4, 14

By JANET EASTMAN
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

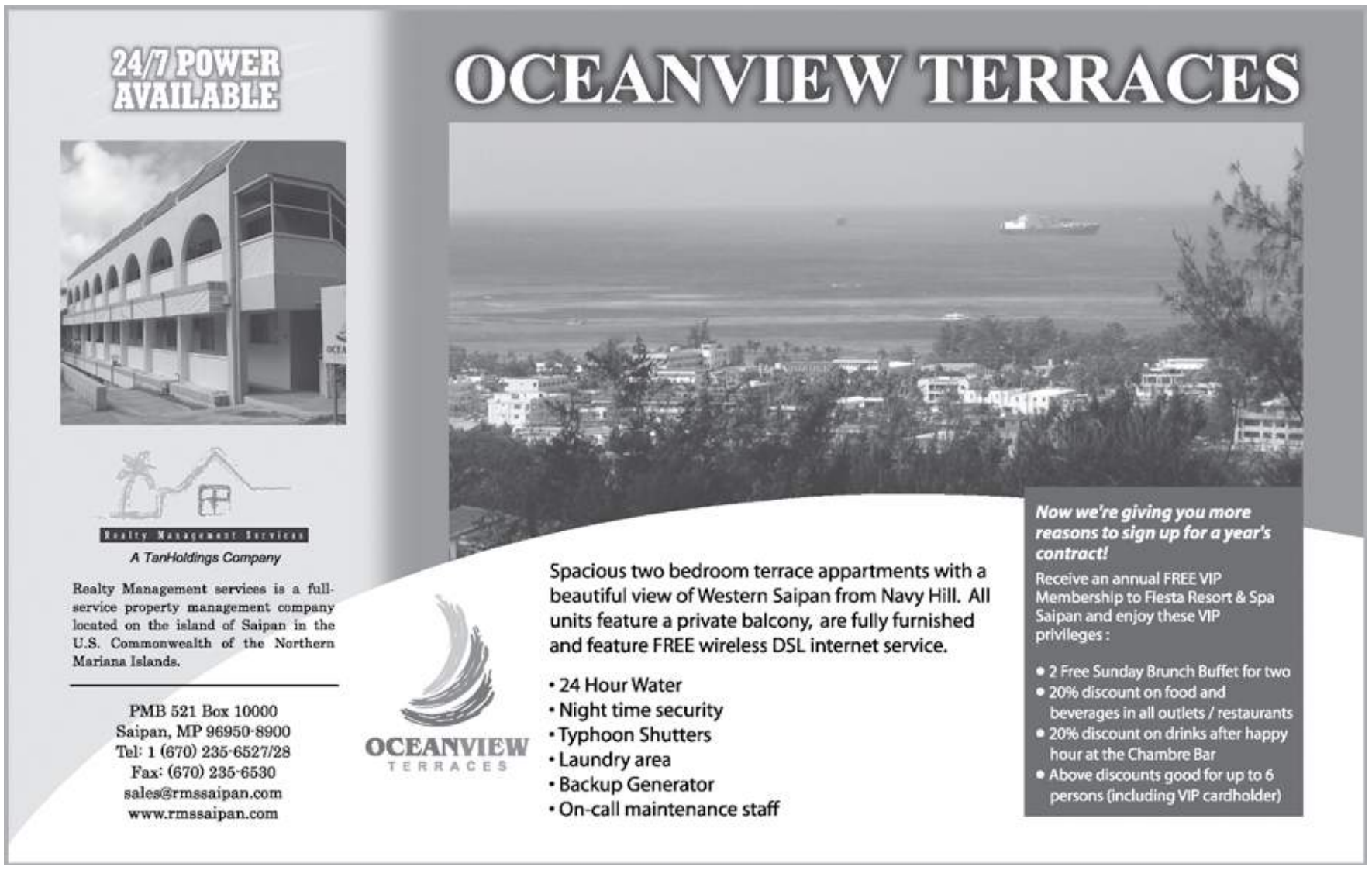
Need a large table for some occasions, a smaller table for others?

Steve Sharpe solved this problem by buying four 3 1/2-foot-square tables that he pushes together to make one large dining surface. When needed, the tables can be parted and used either to seat guests or as serving stations.

The Neolitico tables by Italian Massimo Morozzi were purchased at a now-defunct Los Angeles store. Strips of wood screwed to the underside of the Macassar tabletops keep the four pieces together. Underneath, the spool-like, aluminum pedestals are aligned in perfect geometry.

Designers Ramiro Diaz-Granados and Heather Flood of F-lab had a similar idea. They created a circular board-of-directors table for the Southern California Institute of Architecture that is actually 11 wedge-shaped tables that can be joined to accommodate 24 people. Called CHUB, for "central hub," the layered Baltic birch plywood tables with glass tops are mounted on casters so they can roll into place and plug into power and data lines.

"How often would someone need a table that's 19 feet in diameter?" Flood asks. "Eleven individual tables that can be refigured in so many ways are more practical."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• 2 Free Sunday Brunch Buffet for two
• 20% discount on food and beverages in all outlets / restaurants
• 20% discount on drinks after happy hour at the Chambre Bar
• Above discounts good for up to 6 persons (including VIP cardholder)

Monitoring termites

By JOEL M. LERNER, APLD
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

Q. I am interested in a nontoxic system for monitoring termites.

A. The two most common monitoring devices for termites are the Sentricon Termite Colony Elimination System and the Exterra Termite Interception and Baiting System. They consist of a series of boxes containing untreated plain wood that are installed around a house.

The pest control company monitors the boxes, and if it sees termites feeding, it adds bait to the box. The termites then eat the bait and take it back to the nest and share it with the rest of the colony. The bait interferes with termites' molting, and, over several months, the entire colony is eliminated. Relatively small amounts of the molting inhibitor are needed compared with the massive quantities of the strong residual insecticide used as barrier treatments.

Here are a few guidelines offered by Michael F. Potter, an extension entomologist with the University of Kentucky, on other safe ways to avoid termite problems:

■ No wood on your house should touch the ground. Wooden siding, lattice, and door and window frames should be at least six inches above ground.

■ Don't let moisture accumulate near foundations. Divert water away from the house by grading the soil away from the building.

■ Never store firewood, lumber or other wood debris against the foundation. They attract termites and provide a source of food. Vines, ivy and other dense plant material should not touch the house.

■ Use mulch sparingly. Two inches of mulch is ample, and it should never contact wood siding or framing of doors or windows. Consider using gravel instead; it also retains moisture in the soil.

Joel M. Lerner is president of Environmental Design in Capitol View Park, Md. E-mail or contact him through his Web site, www.garden-lerner.com.

Putting chair rungs in their place

By SAMANTHA MAZZOTTA
(C) 2008 KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

Q: My mother gave me a set of kitchen chairs that are very nice, but the cross-braces between the legs are mostly loose and either pop out or spin around in their sockets. Is there any way to fix these?

A: If the chairs or chair legs are not too badly warped, resetting the rungs (the cross-braces between the legs) should be fairly easy. You'll need to pick up some wood glue or aliphatic adhesive from the home-improvement store, as well as a clothesline or other sturdy, thin rope and a wooden dowel.

Turn the affected chairs over so that you can easily reach the rungs. Carefully coax the loose rung out of its socket to apply glue to the end—or, if that is not possible, apply glue by pressing the applicator nozzle as far into the socket as you can and squeezing a small amount in four opposite places. Do the same for the socket on the other side.

Wrap a piece of the clothesline around the two chair legs to which the rung is attached. Make sure the clothesline is placed below the rungs, where the chair legs are wider (or, since the chair is upside down, above the rungs). Tie it snugly. Then, take the wooden dowel. Hold it between the two sides of the clothesline, then use it to twirl the clothesline together so that it becomes fairly tight—not so much that it warps the chair legs, but enough to hold the rung firmly in place. Brace the dowel against the rung so it doesn't spin freely (you might also want to tape it against the rung to keep it secure).

Keep the clothesline in place until the glue sets, about 24 hours.

HOME TIP: Try repairing split chair rungs before replacing them. Glue the split together, then wrap duct tape around the rung to hold it in place for a day.

Send questions or home-repair tips to homeguru2000@hotmail.com, or write This Is a Hammer, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

Check water temperature for kids' safety

By GARY DYMSKI
(C) 2008, NEWSDAY

It was days before the baby girl would turn a year old, and her grandmother was giving her a bath. The phone rang. Grandma took but a minute to answer the call.

In that instant, the baby from an Atlanta suburb tried pulling herself up using the hot-water handle on the tub faucet. The faucet opened, and she was scalded by 140-degree water, resulting in third-degree burns over most of her body. After being airlifted to a hospital, she died less than a week later.

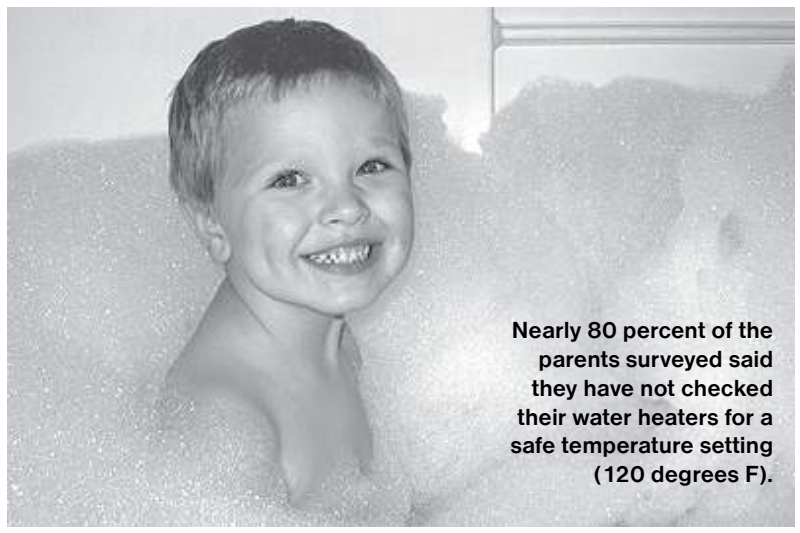
"That story just got to me," says Meri-K Appy, president of the Home Safety Council, which recently released results of a survey on injuries from hot tap water. "After the survey results, I guess I'm surprised that more accidents don't happen. It's amazing how so few of us think about being burned by our tap water."

According to a study by Kelton Research on behalf of HotStop (a maker of antiscalding products) and the national nonprofit Home Safety Council, about 3,800 injuries and 34 deaths occur in the home annually because of scalding from hot tap water.

Nearly 80 percent of the parents surveyed said they have not checked their water heaters for a safe temperature setting (120 degrees F).

It's an oversight, of course. Who would think household tap water could be so harmful, even deadly? Certainly not that Georgia grandmother in 2002.

Appy says that's one of the problems. It's something most of us never think about. "One way to reduce the risk is to simply adjust the thermostat on your water heater," Appy says. "Most heaters have adjustable thermostats, and dialing it down to 120 degrees can prevent some of these accidents."


Nearly 80 percent of the parents surveyed said they have not checked their water heaters for a safe temperature setting (120 degrees F).

Studies show that tap water at 140 degrees can burn skin in just seconds. At 120 degrees, burning can take up to five minutes.

Most prone to scalding are infants and older adults, whose skin often is softer. In addition to lessening the risk of scalding, lowering the water heater thermostat from 140 degrees to 120 degrees can save almost 70 percent on water heating costs.

It is important that hot tap water be set at 120 degrees to eliminate bacteria. After dialing down the temperature, test the water with a thermometer. If necessary, adjust the thermostat again to maintain hot water at 120 degrees.

Appy says other minor steps also can be taken, including running the cold water before turning on the hot water.

"I know a lot of us are used to turning on the hot water first, then adjusting the temperature at the faucet by turning on the cold water," she says. "Just do it the other way around, so the hot water doesn't rush out."

Other safety tips:

Test tub water using your own skin. Reach into the water up to your elbow before placing the child into the tub. If the water is too hot for your forearm, it will be too hot for the child.

Keep children within arm's reach when they're bathing. Never leave them alone.

Even when using the tub, turn on cold water first, then adjust tap temperature by turning on the hot water.

The tap-water study also showed that only 4 percent of adults surveyed had installed an antiscald device.

"That was very surprising," Appy says, "because many of the new devices are inexpensive and can be easy to install."

While it does not commonly endorse products, Appy says the Home Safety Council is encouraging installation of HotStop antiscald faucets, tub spouts and showerheads.

Available at Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse stores (for between $24 and $39), these devices can be easily installed by the average adult—how hard is it to hand tighten a new shower head?—and will instantly reduce the flow of water to a trickle when it reaches unsafe temperatures.

The devices also are available at h2otstop.com.

"It's so easy, and in this case inexpensive, to prevent scalding," Appy says. "The main thing about the survey, however, is how few of us are aware of the dangers."

To review survey results, visit www.HomeSafetyCouncil.org.

KITCHEN MAGIC

Italian Pasta Pie

8 ounces rotelle or elbow macaroni
Salt
1 cup bottled marinara or spaghetti sauce
1 package (8-ounce, 2 cups) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
2 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup shortening or butter-flavor shortening
1 large egg
1 container (15-ounce) part-skim ricotta cheese
1 container (7-ounce) refrigerated pesto sauce
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese, (optional)

1. In saucepot, prepare macaroni as label directs, using 2 teaspoons salt in water. Drain macaroni; return to saucepot. Stir in marinara sauce and 1 cup shredded mozzarella; set aside.

2. Meanwhile, in large bowl, combine flour and 1/2 teaspoon salt. With pastry blender or two knives used scissor-fashion, cut in shortening until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. With fork, stir in 4 to 5 tablespoons cold water just until mixture holds together. Shape dough into a ball; set aside.

3. In cup, lightly beat egg; reserve 1 tablespoon beaten egg for brushing on crust later. Place remaining egg in medium bowl; stir in ricotta cheese, pesto sauce and pepper.

4. On lightly floured surface, with floured rolling pin, roll two-thirds of dough into rectangle 2 inches larger all around than inverted 11-by-7-inch glass baking dish. Gently ease dough into baking dish, allowing dough to hang over edge.

5. Sprinkle remaining 1 cup mozzarella cheese over bottom of dough in baking dish. Top with half of pesto mixture, all of macaroni mixture, then remaining pesto mixture.

6. Preheat oven to 400 F. Roll remaining dough into 12-by-8-inch rectangle; lift onto top of pie. Fold overhang under and pinch to form stand-up edge; flute. Cut slits in top of crust to allow steam to escape during baking. Brush top of pie with reserved egg; sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese.

7. Bake pie 40 to 45 minutes until crust is golden brown and filling is hot. Serves 8.

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The Good Life

Two hours on London's billionaires' row

By KEVIN SULLIVAN
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

LONDON—Rolls-Royces and Range Rovers lined The Bishops Avenue as hundreds of guests poured into Royal Mansion, the boldest and brassiest house in the neighborhood—quite a feat on a street where the Saudi royal family owns 10 homes.

Russian ex-president Mikhail Gorbachev was the guest of honor at a London real-estate firm's 30th anniversary party. While Gorbachev reminisced about working on the land, uniformed servers poured from $100 bottles of French champagne as if they were watering the plants.
THE WASHINGTON POST

Almost comically large men with impeccable manners, like aristocratic bears, checked invitations at the gates at 7 on a Monday evening. Five hundred guests filed through the enormous marble foyer and into the 80-foot-long salon, where uniformed servers poured from $100 bottles of French champagne as if they were watering the plants.

The swells nibbled blini loaded with walloping dollops of Russian caviar, flanked on one side by a silently rising and falling glass elevator and on the other by a platinum blonde in pointy leopard-print pumps singing jazz.

Somewhere in here, Mikhail Gorbachev was waiting to speak. The man who presided over the Soviet Union's going-away party was now the guest of honor at the 30th anniversary party of a London real estate firm.

Asked to explain why, Trevor Abrahmsohn, the real estate whiz hosting the party, said he and Gorbachev both supported leukemia charities and had Russian friends in common. Gorbachev and the Royal Mansion were both "icons," he observed, so the pairing made sense.

The Raisa Gorbachev Foundation, named in honor of Gorbachev's wife, who died of leukemia in 1999, said that the former leader received no fee for attending the party but that the foundation had received a "five-figure"—in pounds—donation.

The guests didn't appear to be dwelling on the details. All that mattered, it seemed, was that on a London night as cool as a bucket of diamonds, the Other Half was having what amounted to a big old cash bonfire.

"They spent 50,000 pounds on caviar!" said one slightly wobbly blond woman, in a way that suggested she knew what she was talking about, even after a couple of flutes of bubbly.

Abrahmsohn and his company, Glentree International, handle some of London's priciest homes, with special emphasis on The Bishops Avenue, a row of billionaires' trophies nestled regally next to Hampstead Heath. In the long-ago days when mere millionaires could afford to live here, Elizabeth Taylor had a place around the corner. But she has given way to the Saudis, the sultan of Brunei and Britain's richest man, steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal.

The world's financial markets may have the jitters, and house prices are dropping, but The Bishops Avenue is insulated from all that by thick fortress walls of money. No subprime mortgages here—buyers pay cash.

And no house screams cash like the Royal Mansion, which recently changed hands for about $100 million and has eight kitchens, a Turkish bath for 20 people and a 28-car underground garage. According to Glentree, the new owners plan to spend an additional $60 million to spruce the place up and add a cinema and helipad.

Abrahmsohn said the new owners are the family of Hourieh Peramaa, a property mogul in her 70s who is originally from Kazakhstan. At the party, her daughter-in-law, Yassmin, 33, an elegant and towering woman in a remarkable red "hello, boys" dress, worked the room but politely declined to comment when approached by a reporter.

She then glided back into the chattering throng, among people sipping Cuban rum and Russian vodka and nibbling from a vast sushi bar set up next to a 40-foot-long dining room table.

One man wore a black velvet dinner jacket and a single pearl earring. Another wore a narrow black tie made from what appeared to be alligator skin. Several women were wrapped in fur while others wore barely anything, the competing sensibilities of guests who jetted in from Palm Beach and various winter-bound European capitals.

Then Gorbachev emerged from a private room and made his way to a lectern. A month shy of 77, he looked a little heavier, maybe, perhaps a little glassier in the eyes, but still forcefully energetic.

Speaking in Russian through an interpreter, Gorbachev recounted with obvious melancholy a childhood in which he had "learned the value of working on the land" and developed an affinity for "the working person." He spoke tenderly about meeting his late wife, Raisa, when he was 22 and she was 21. "We were a good fit," he said, softly. Gorbachev picked up steam when talking about his meeting earlier in the day with Prime Minister Gordon Brown. He said that the two had discussed recent tensions between London and Moscow and that he had told Brown: "We regard you and the Europeans as our friends. But you do not have enough patience with the Russians. Please have more patience. We can't create democracy like instant coffee."

He got his biggest cheer of the night at the expense of the United States: "I tell the Americans, you want us to have a democracy like yours. Well, we don't want to have a democracy like yours. We want a better democracy."

He said many countries were "rolling back democracy" because "it had not delivered everything." He said that the world needed "strong democratic leadership" and that Russia, Europe and the United States needed to work together against poverty and terrorism. "Our history is a common history," he said.

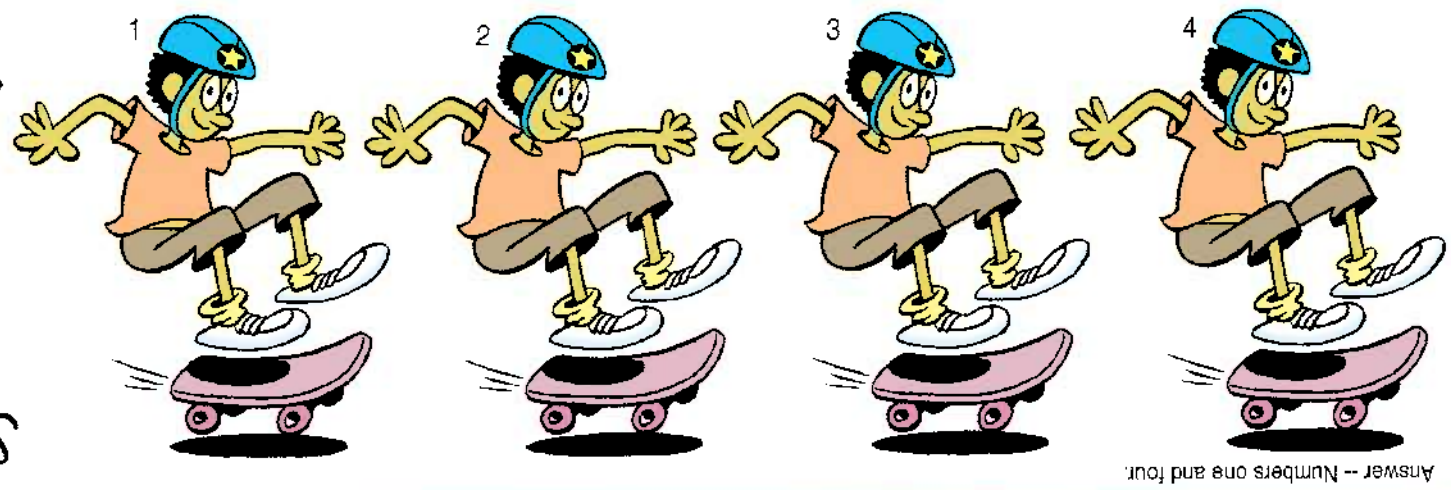
Gorbachev made a joke that resonated with his cash-bathed audience. "Many Russians bring their money to your country," he said. "Be careful, they might buy everything here!"

With that, he posed for a few photos and was driven off in a Mercedes sedan, waved on his way by Yassmin, a shivering statue in red chiffon.

It was 9 o'clock on a Monday night. Time for the roast beef course.

Bob Weber Jr.'s Slylock Fox and Comics for Kids

Which two scenes are exactly alike?

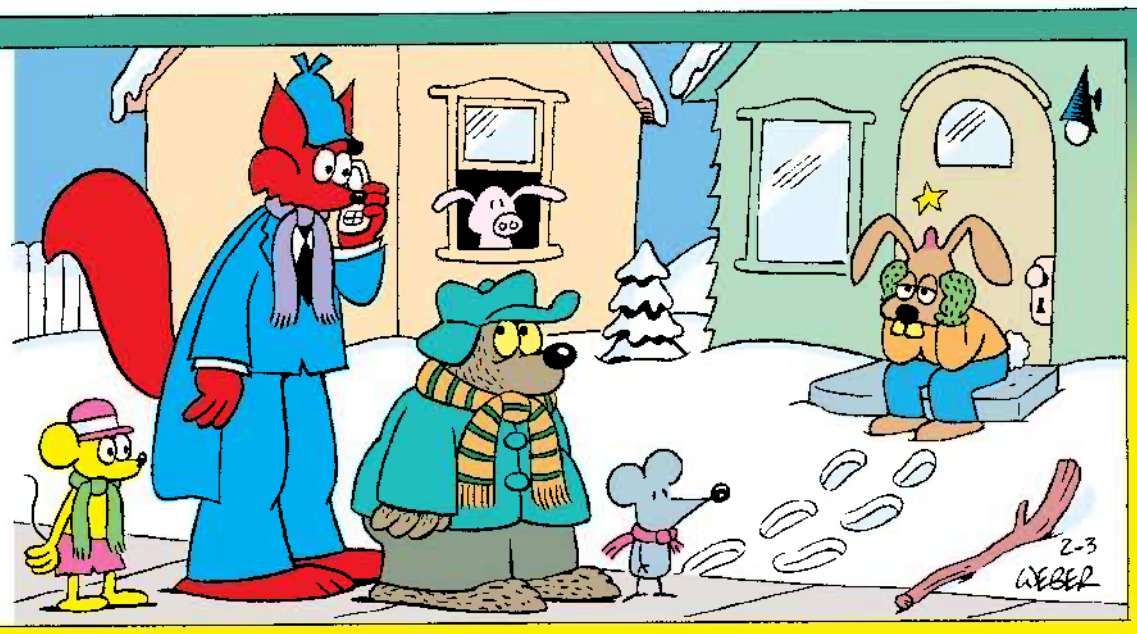


Answer -- Numbers one and four.

One of these two suspects followed Ronny Rabbit to his doorstep, clobbered him on the back of the head with a branch and stole his wallet before fleeing. Which suspect does Slylock Fox believe is guilty and why?

Solution -- Only Randy Rabbit's footprints lead to the doorstep. Slylock suspects Rat, with his small feet, stepped into the rabbit's footprints as he followed and then fled.

More Slylock Fox puzzles at **kidcartoonists.com**



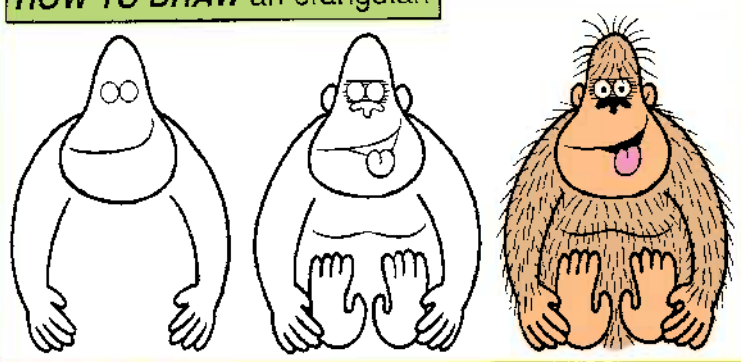
Find six differences between these panels.

www.kidcartoonists.com

Answer -- Button, moon, twig, carrot, bush and mouth.

New! The fourth ***Find the six differences*** collection is here. Send $4 (check/money order in U.S. funds made payable to King Features) with your name and address to **Six Differences No. 4,** P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

HOW TO DRAW an orangutan



YOUR DRAWING

Today's artist is Robert Wagner, age 13, of Orwin, PA

Submit your art to My Drawing, P.O. Box 69534, Oro Valley, AZ 85737

Which one of the following is not an ape?

a) Chimpanzee
b) Baboon
c) Gibbon
d) Gorilla
e) Orangutan

Answer -- b) The baboon is a monkey.

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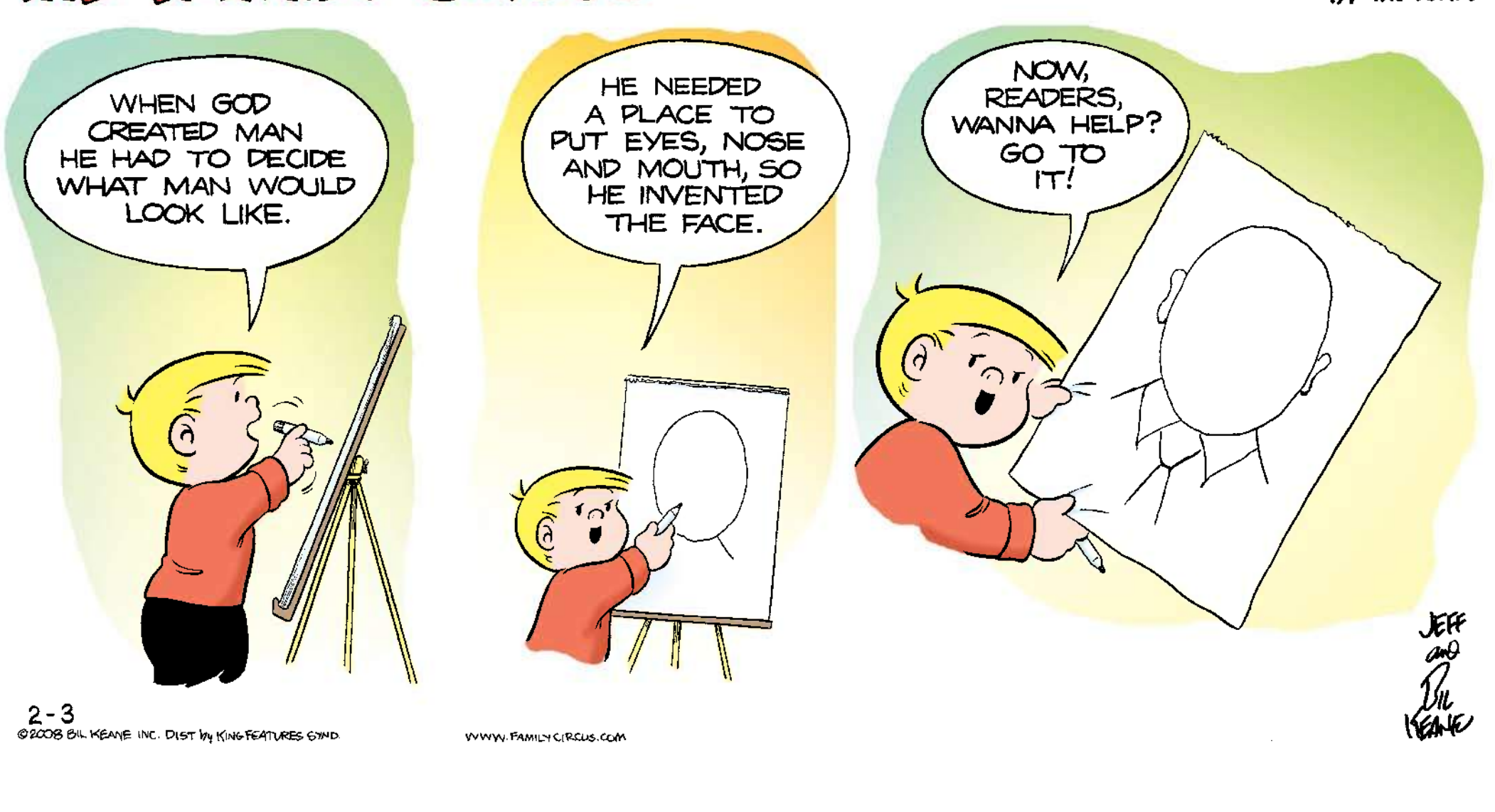
THE FAMILY CIRCUS®

By Bil Keane


WHEN GOD CREATED MAN HE HAD TO DECIDE WHAT MAN WOULD LOOK LIKE.
HE NEEDED A PLACE TO PUT EYES, NOSE AND MOUTH, SO HE INVENTED THE FACE.
NOW, READERS, WANNA HELP? GO TO IT!
JEFF and BIL KEANE

2-3

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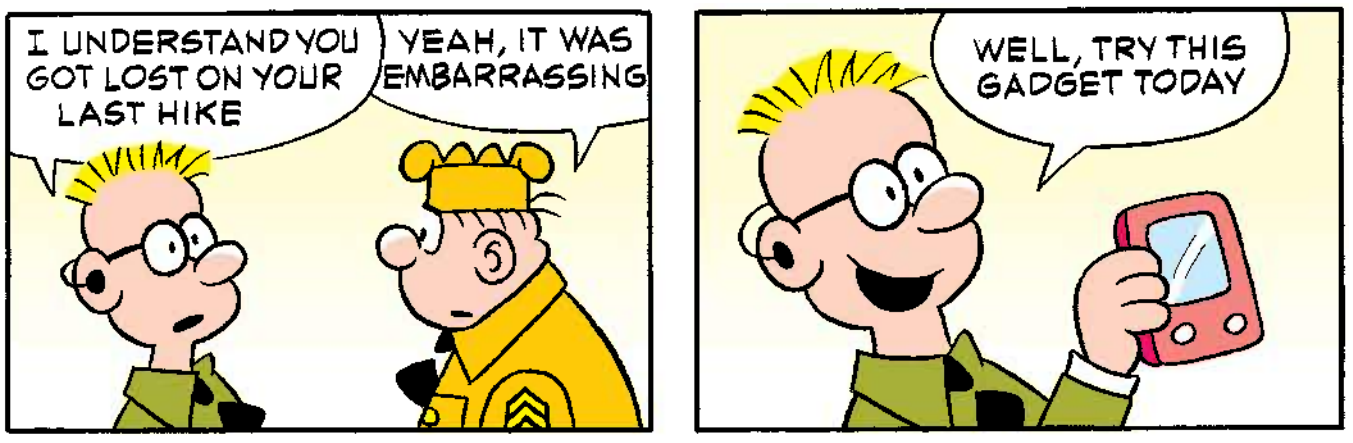
WWW.FAMILYCIRCUS.COM

Mort Walker's

beetle bailey®


I UNDERSTAND YOU GOT LOST ON YOUR LAST HIKE
YEAH, IT WAS EMBARRASSING
WELL, TRY THIS GADGET TODAY
I ENTERED THE COORDINATES OF YOUR HIKE INTO THIS G.P.S.– JUST FOLLOW THE VOICE COMMANDS
GO LEFT AT THE TOP OF THE HILL
NOW GO STRAIGHT FOR A SHORT DISTANCE

GO OVER THE BRIDGE AND TURN LEFT AGAIN
2-3
TURN LEFT AT THE NEXT PATH
CAMP SWAMPY
WWW.MORTWALKER.COM
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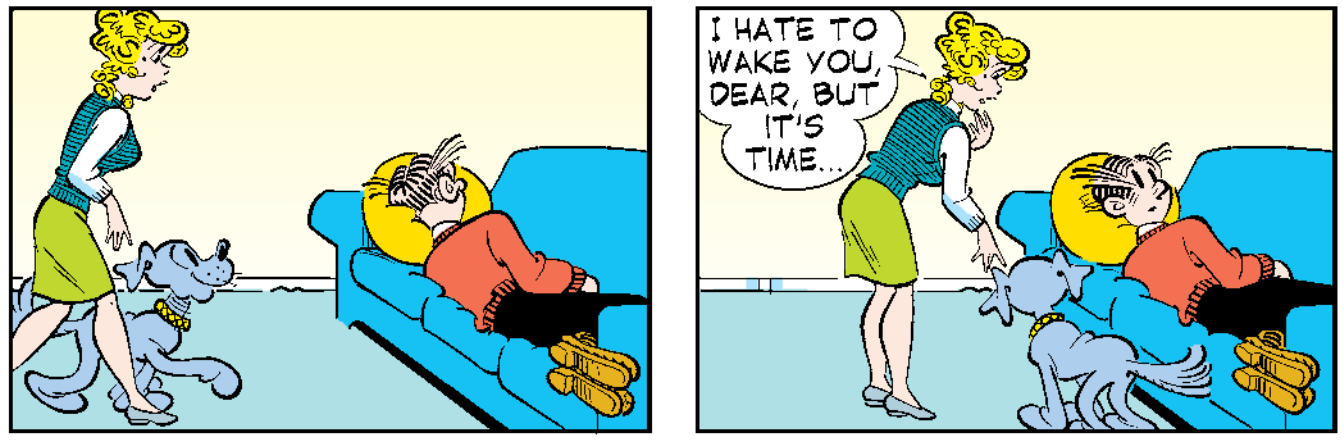
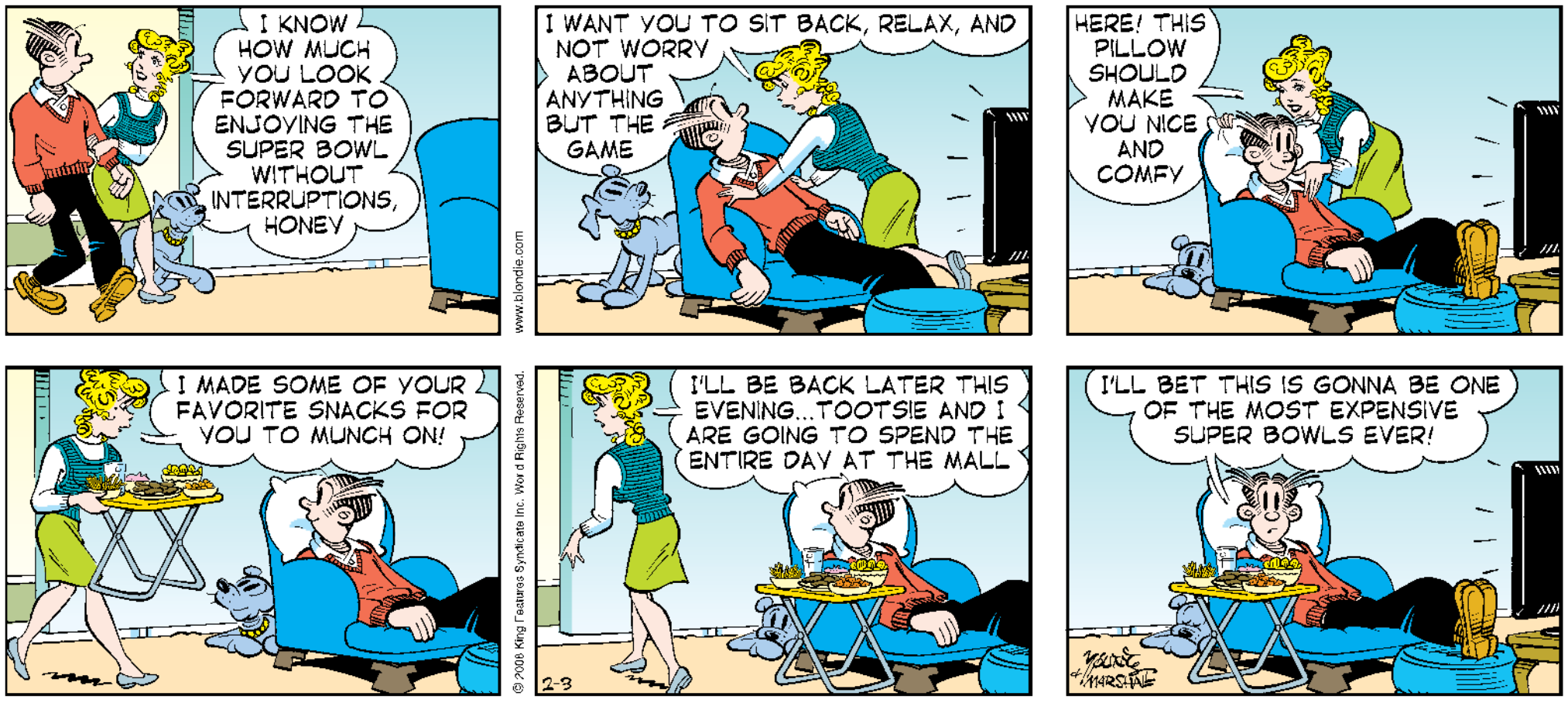
YOU ARE BACK AT CAMP
HEY!
THANKS FOR THE SHORTCUT, GIZMO
YOU OWE ME ONE
GREG+ MORT WALKER

BLONDIE

BY DEAN YOUNG & JOHN MARSHALL




I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU LOOK FORWARD TO ENJOYING THE SUPER BOWL WITHOUT INTERRUPTIONS, HONEY
I WANT YOU TO SIT BACK, RELAX, AND NOT WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING BUT THE GAME
HERE! THIS PILLOW SHOULD MAKE YOU NICE AND COMFY
I MADE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE SNACKS FOR YOU TO MUNCH ON!
I'LL BE BACK LATER THIS EVENING...TOOTSIE AND I ARE GOING TO SPEND THE ENTIRE DAY AT THE MALL
I'LL BET THIS IS GONNA BE ONE OF THE MOST EXPENSIVE SUPER BOWLS EVER!
www.blondie.com
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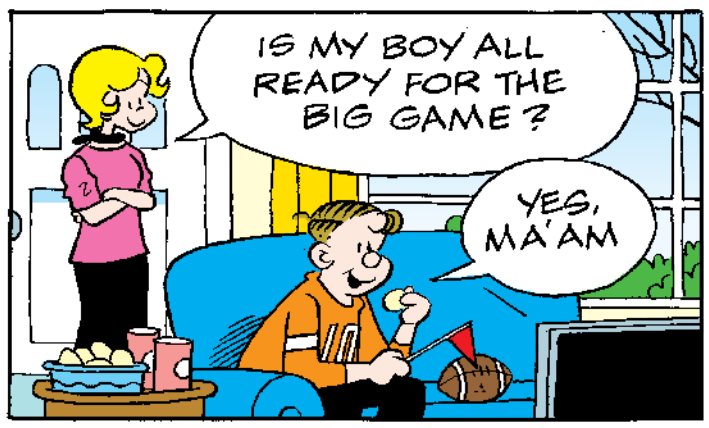
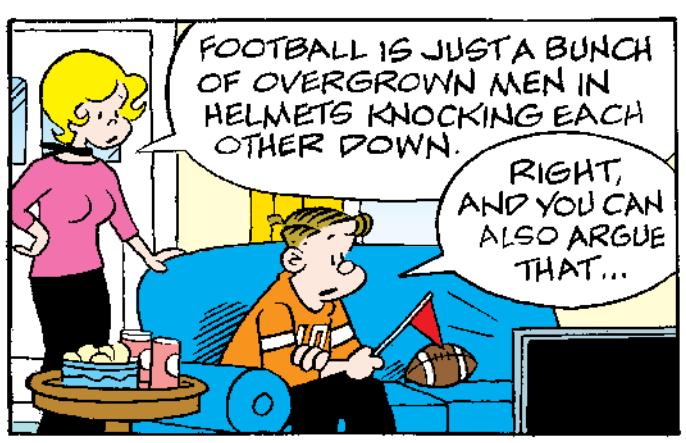
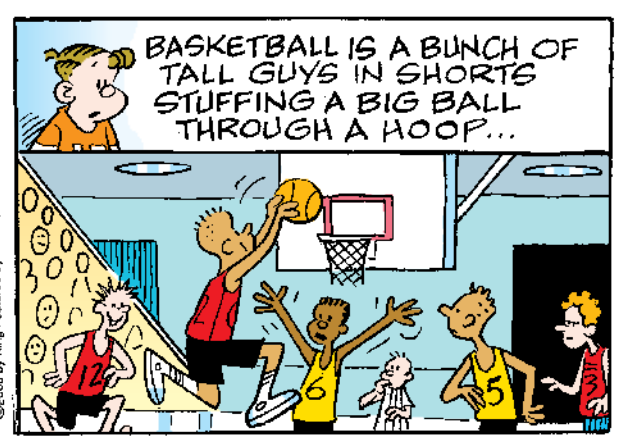
2-3

Hi and Lois

by GREG & BRIAN WALKER







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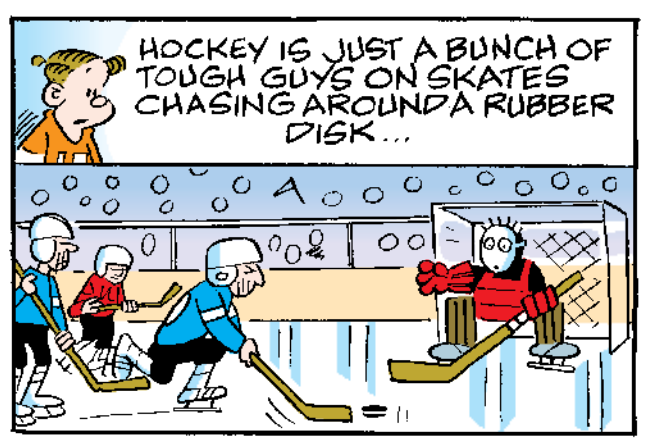
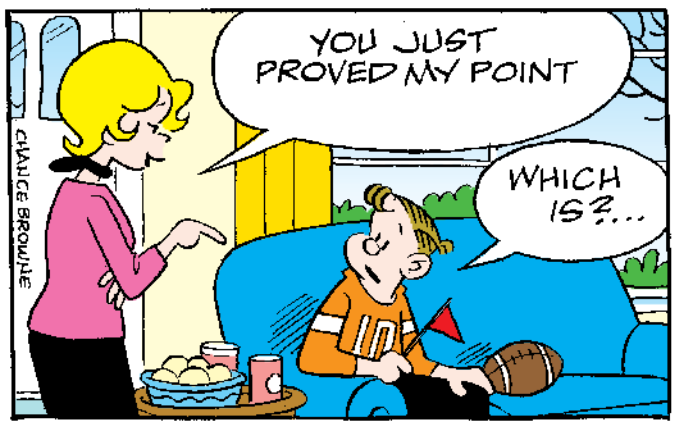
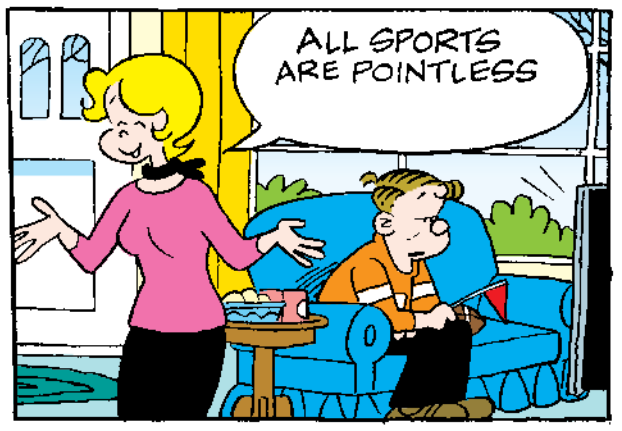


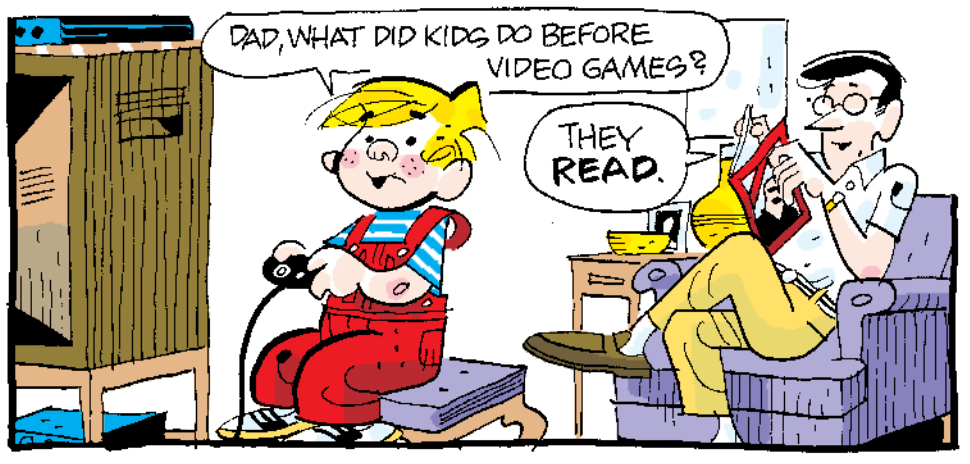


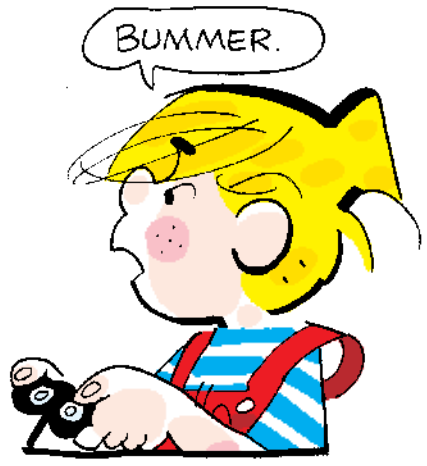


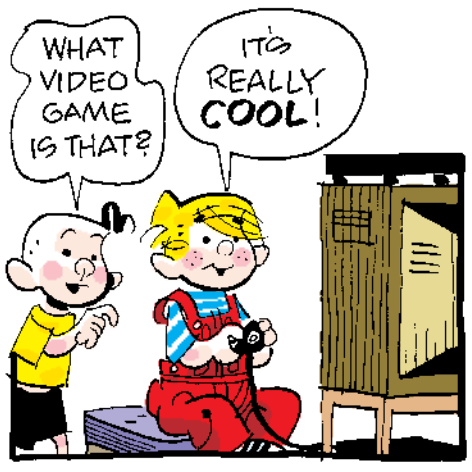
Hank Ketcham's

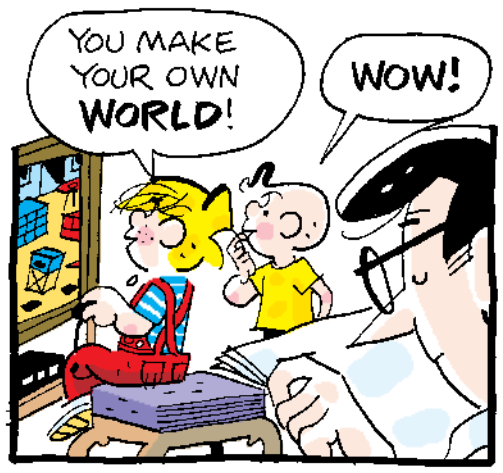
Dennis the Menace

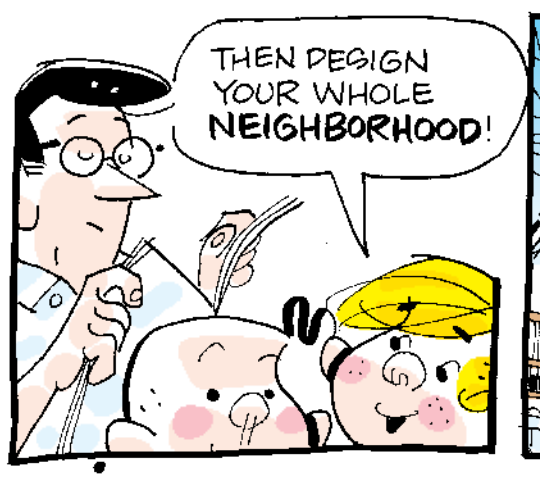
Game Plan

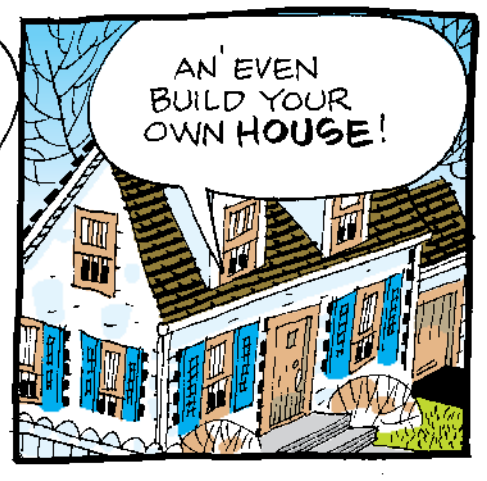












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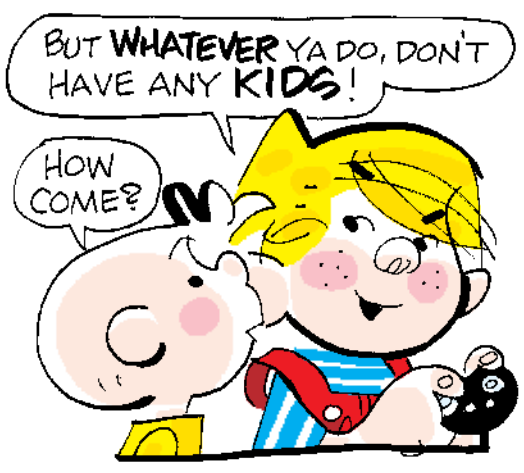
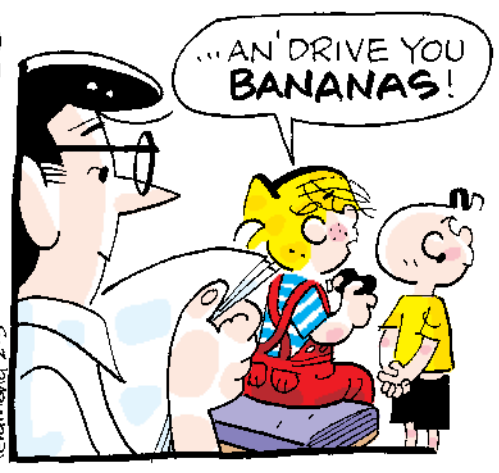


www.dennisthemenace.com



Fenninger 2-3

BABY BLUES™
BY RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT
OKAY!
THIS ISN'T WORKING.
ZOE, KEEP AN EYE ON WREN SO I CAN GET DINNER READY.
HAMMIE! KEEP AN EYE ON WREN WHILE I FINISH THIS CHAPTER!
DADDY, KEEP AN EYE ON WREN WHILE I PRACTICE MY SWING.
WANDA, KEEP AN EYE ON WREN WHILE I TIGHTEN THIS FAUCET.
BY THE WAY, WHEN IS DINNER GOING TO BE READY?
www.babyblues.com
2/3 KIRKMAN & SCOTT
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Salome's Stars

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You're eager to take on that new opportunity opening up as January gives way to February. Now all you need to do is resist quitting too early. Do your best to stay with it.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Doff a bit of that careful, conservative outlook and let your brave Bovine self take a chance on meeting that new challenge. You could be surprised at how well you do.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) You might not want to return to the more serious tasks facing you. But you know it's what you must do. Cheer up. Something more pleasant will soon occupy your time.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) As you dutifully tidy up your end-of-the-month tasks, your fun self emerges to urge you to do something special: A trip (or a cruise, maybe?) could be just what you need.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) Your achievements are admirable as you close out the month with a roar. Now you can treat yourself to some well-earned time off for fun with family or friends. (Or both!)

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Be sure you know the facts before you assume someone is holding back on your project. Try to open your mind before you give someone a piece of it.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) You might feel comfortable in your familiar surroundings, but it might be time to venture into something new. There's a challenge out there that's just right for you.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Your love of things that are new gets a big boost as you encounter a situation that opens up new and exciting vistas. How far you go with it depends on you.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) That recent workplace shift might not seem to be paying off as you expected. But be patient. There are changes coming that could make a big difference.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) While few can match the Goat's fiscal wizardry, you still need to be wary in your dealings. There might be a problem you should know about sooner rather than later.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Easy does it when it comes to love and all the other good things in life. Don't try to force them to develop on your schedule. Best to let it happen naturally.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) A surprise decision by someone you trust causes some stormy moments. But a frank discussion explains everything, and helps save a cherished relationship.

BORN THIS WEEK: Sometimes you forget to take care of yourself, because you're so busy caring for others. But you wouldn't have it any other way.

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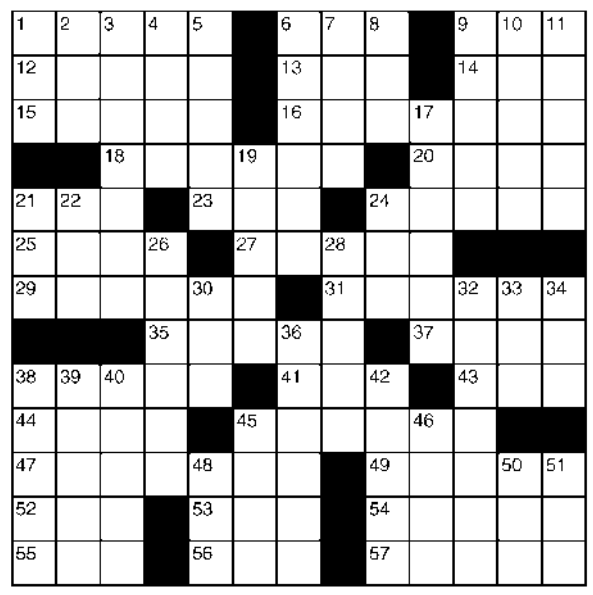
King Crossword



ACROSS
1 Towns
6 "Bam!"
9 Raw rock
12 Dizzying designs
13 Mimic
14 Gender
15 Ancient Roman port
16 Workaday grind
18 Beast
20 Culture medium
21 Pismire
23 Affirmative action?
24 Skilled
25 Out of bounds
27 "Aida" composer
29 Period of decline
31 Blue shades
35 Fillies' mothers
37 No purebred
38 Reached
41 1950s DJ's stack
43 Festive
44 Belligerent deity
45 Kitchen device
47 Hoarder of a sort
49 Wipe out
52 Biblical verb suffix
53 Rocks
54 Chipped in
55 — Moines
56 Garden plot
57 ... and what may grow there

DOWN
1 Greet the villain
2 Boom times
3 Knocking noise
4 Smile
5 Blotch
6 Procession
7 October stone
8 Drench
9 Orange variety
10 Summarize
11 Put forth
17 Curie discovery
19 Man with a van
21 Keep talking
22 Ultramodernist
24 Wood-shaping tool
26 Grayish-red
28 Grates
30 Roscoe
32 Kids (Sl.)
33 Greek vowel
34 Pigs' digs
36 Walking on air
38 Stared open-mouthed
39 Speak from the soapbox
40 Georgia and Cal
42 Remove wool
45 Spiked club
46 Cube-maker Rubik
48 Eve, originally
50 Witness
51 Mag. staffers

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top ten

Houseplants for cleaner air

1. Areca palm
2. Reed palm
3. Dwarf date palm
4. Boston fern
5. Janet Craig dracaena
6. English Ivy
7. Australian sword fern
8. Peace lily
9. Rubber plant
10. Weeping fig

Source: www.care2.com

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KING CROSSWORD LAST SUNDAY'S ANSWERS

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United States

Envoy: US troops to be in Iraq into '09

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Bush's top diplomat in Iraq said Friday that the U.S. plans to keep combat troops there into 2009, seen as the tipping point for establishing the nation's long-term security, and he offered no deadline for a full withdrawal.

Ambassador Ryan Crocker told The Associated Press that he can't make any promises if, as the Democratic candidates have signaled, the next president pulls forces out faster or in greater numbers.

Crocker

Crocker said America remains "a center of gravity" in Iraq almost five years after invasion, and that violence and political development both hinge to a considerable degree on whether U.S. forces remain there.

Crocker said he and Gen. David Petraeus, the top U.S. military commander in Iraq, would make the best of any change in plans ordered from the top.

"Obviously, we're not the ones who make the policy decisions - not in this administration and not in the next one," Crocker said. "If someone wants to reset the conditions, then obviously we'll do the best we can within the context but those aren't assumptions that we start with."

Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., and Barack Obama, D-Ill., have said they would begin withdrawing forces quickly if elected - Obama would bring all combat forces home within 16 months. Clinton has not set a deadline but says she wants to bring most home inside one year.

Both candidates would phase out the withdrawals - and leave a small number of forces behind for specific missions. Either Clinton or Obama is expected to become the Democratic nominee.

Republican front-runners Sen. John McCain of Arizona and former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney say they would essentially continue Bush's strategy of bringing troops home only as conditions warrant.

Romney concedes Northeast to McCain

DENVER (AP)—Republican Mitt Romney is conceding the bulk of the Northeast to rival John McCain, counting instead on his home state of Massachusetts, a split in California and wins in a series of caucus states to extend his presidential campaign beyond Super Tuesday.

Missing from Romney's latest campaign schedule were winner-take-all states of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, which account for 180 of the 1,023 delegates at stake. The omissions were telling with voting in 21 GOP contests on Tuesday.

The former Massachusetts governor was in Colorado Friday and planned to attend the funeral of Mormon church President Gordon B. Hinckley on Saturday in Utah. Romney also scheduled campaign events in Minnesota, Illinois, Missouri, Tennessee, Georgia and West Virginia before arriving home Tuesday.

Colorado and Minnesota are caucuses states where a grassroots effort could help secure a win, while West Virginia will award its delegates at a convention Romney plans to address before flying to Massachusetts to both vote and await the returns.

Romney has also deployed four of his five sons to Maine, Montana and Idaho, which hold caucuses on Saturday and Tuesday, and Alaska, which has a party convention on Tuesday.

If he fails to capture enough delegates to offset McCain's likely wins in other states and strong showing in California, where the Arizona senator has the backing of Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Romney could end his campaign in Boston on Wednesday.

Republican presidential hopeful, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, walks with his granddaughter Chloe heading to speak at a campaign stop in San Diego, Calif., Thursday, Jan. 31, 2008.
AP

Obama says he'd be better against McCain

AP
Democratic presidential hopeful ,Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., campaigns during a rally in Santa Fe, N.M., Friday, Feb. 1, 2008.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Democratic Sen. Barack Obama sees one of the best arguments for his presidential candidacy in the rise of Republican Sen. John McCain. McCain has become Obama's favorite punching bag, an easier mark in front of partisan audiences than the rival Obama will have to beat first to get to the general election—Hillary Rodham Clinton.

But he also likes to lump the two of them together as co-supporters of the war in Iraq.

"It is time for new leadership that understands the way to win a debate with John McCain or any Republican who is nominated is not by nominating someone who agreed with him on voting for the war in Iraq," Obama said during a speech in Denver Wednesday.

10 get $15.5M for Mich. prison sex abuse

LANSING, Mich. (AP)—Ten female inmates who say male workers raped and sexually abused them in a state prison were awarded $15.5 million Friday in what may be the first of several trials.

The jury's decision was unanimous, and the panel's foreperson took the rare step of apologizing to the women on behalf of Michigan citizens.

Washtenaw Circuit Court Judge Timothy Connors allowed the plaintiffs to speak to the jury.

"I'm heading back to prison today," one of the women said, the Detroit Free Press reported. "I feel strong today because of you. I thank you for believing in us."

The Department of Corrections plans to appeal. Spokesman Russ Marlan said the department fired workers if the allegations were substantiated, but that many of the allegations did not come out until trial.

ACROSS THE NATION

Storms make drivers slip, fliers wait

CHICAGO (AP)—Winter storms at both ends of the country dumped snow and snarled air and land travel Friday, killing at least 10 people, blocking major highways and even stranding 400 train passengers in the mountains of the Pacific Northwest. Nearly 7 1/2 inches of snow was reported at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport before the front moved out of the area Friday. About 500 flights were canceled at O'Hare, which canceled 600 flights Thursday and housed hundreds of stranded travelers who spent the night awaiting planes from other cities also affected by the storm. At least 12 inches of snow was reported in Springfield by Friday morning, said National Weather Service meteorologist Gino Izzi. Other parts of Illinois saw similar amounts.

Elderly nun gets jail time in sex case

MILWAUKEE (AP)—A 79-year-old nun was sentenced Friday to one year in a county jail for sexually abusing two teens when she was their principal four decades ago. Sister Norma Giannini avoided a trial by pleading no-contest in November to two felony counts of indecent behavior with a child. "I ask forgiveness from the bottom of my heart," she told Circuit Judge M. Joseph Donald at her sentencing. One of Giannini's accusers, James St. Patrick, 55, of Belgium, Wis., asked Donald to impose a longer sentence. In addition to the year behind bars, Giannini was ordered to serve 10 years of supervised probation. She has 60 days to report to jail. The other accuser, Gerald Kobs, also 55, sobbed as he told the judge the abuse left him suicidal and emotionally withdrawn.

Convict accused of raping boy in library

NEW BEDFORD, Mass. (AP)—A convicted sex offender who was released from prison over prosecutors' objections has been charged with raping a 6-year-old at a public library while the boy's mother used a computer nearby. Corey Saunders was arrested outside a homeless shelter Wednesday evening shortly after a librarian saw them together, became suspicious and notified the mother, authorities said. Authorities allege Saunders lured the boy into a secluded corner of the library and raped him. New Bedford police Lt. Jeff Silva said the boy did not scream because he was paralyzed by fear; Saunders demanded the boy's address and threatened to rape him again, Silva said.

6 killed in North Carolina plane crash

MOUNT AIRY, N.C. (AP)—A twin-engine plane crashed Friday as it tried to land amid low fog at a small airport in northwest North Carolina, killing all six people on board, officials said. Stephanie Conner, a Surry County emergency services shift supervisor, said investigators had confirmed there were no survivors. No one on the ground was hurt, said Warren Woodberry, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration. The King Air C90A split in half after falling into a grassy area between two homes near the Mount Airy airport around 11:30 a.m., the Surry County Sheriff's Office said.

Asia

20 die in Sri Lanka bus blast

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—A bomb tore through a packed bus carrying civilians Saturday in central Sri Lanka, killing 20 people and wounding 50 others, the military said.

The blast inside the bus occurred at 7 a.m. in Dambulla, a town about 90 miles northeast of the capital, Colombo, said military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara, blaming separatist Tamil Tiger rebels.

The bus traveling to the north-central town of Anuradhapura was stopped in Dambulla when the blast occurred, Nanayakkara said. Spokesmen for the rebels could not immediately be reached for comment. But the group, listed as a terror organization by the U.S. and European Union, routinely denies responsibility for such attacks.

Violence has intensified on this Indian Ocean island and more than 700 have been killed after the government withdrew from a cease-fire with Tamil rebels last month.

The bus attack came a day after government troops attacked rebel bunkers along the front lines in the island nation's embattled north, triggering a battle that killed 10 guerrillas and two soldiers, the military said.

Army troops, backed by artillery and mortars, launched a pre-dawn attack on rebels guarding the front lines in the northern Jaffna peninsula and destroyed 10 rebel bunkers, said Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara, the military spokesman.

The battle killed 10 rebels and two soldiers, he said. Another six soldiers were wounded.

Bangladesh hit by bird flu outbreak

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—Livestock officials slaughtered more than 27,000 chickens and ducks in northern Bangladesh after bird flu was confirmed at a poultry farm near the border with India, a report said Friday.

Officials in India's West Bengal state, which borders Bangladesh, have been struggling to contain that country's worst-ever outbreak of the virulent H5N1 bird flu virus.

Meanwhile, a heron found dead Monday outside an aviary at a popular Hong Kong theme park has tested positive for the virus, the government said Friday.

In Bangladesh, several hundred chickens died at the poultry farm in Dinajpur district, 170 miles north of Dhaka, and laboratory tests confirmed that the H5N1 virus was responsible, the United News of Bangladesh news agency reported.

Local livestock official Sydur Rahman said more than 27,000 chickens and ducks were killed and more than 60,000 eggs were destroyed on Thursday and Friday in an attempt to halt the spread of the virus, the agency said.

Local officials were not immediately available for comment Friday.

On Thursday, the government warned the Department of Livestock that more precautions were needed to prevent the disease from spreading.

Experts say any widespread outbreak could be disastrous for Bangladesh because of its dense population and poorly equipped public health care system.

Bird flu has been confirmed in at least 30 of Bangladesh's 64 districts and has struck more than 97 farms since it was first detected in February last year. More than 350,000 birds have been slaughtered, according to the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock.

No cases of human infection have been reported.

Chinese workers suffer in snowstorms

GUANGZHOU, China (AP)—Hu Qingyuan camped out Friday, waiting for a train to take him home for the Chinese New Year holiday - his only chance each year to see his wife and 8-year-old son.

At a shopping mall not far away, throngs of middle-class Chinese tried on Nike running shoes, browsed for Swatch watches and ate at McDonald's.

The shoppers seemed light years away from the working masses waiting in the cold rain at the train station in the bustling southern city of Guangzhou.

Dizzying contrasts are on display as China prepares for a holiday that could be spoiled for millions by the worst snowstorms in decades. The freakish weather in southern and eastern China has killed at least 60 people, stranded 5.8 million railway passengers and causing $7.5 billion in damages.

On Saturday, a Cabinet statement reported by state media said China's snow crisis "remains grim" and the public should brace for more bad weather.

"The most difficult period is still not over yet. The situation remains grim," it said, according to Xinhua News Agency..

More snow and sleet were forecast across China's south, where storms have destroyed crops, knocked out power and disrupted trains and trucking. Damage has been reported at $7.5 billion.

AP

Passengers wait in a train to go home at the Guangzhou Railway Station in Guangzhou, in south China's Guangdong province in the late evening of Friday, Feb. 1, 2008.

The Cabinet statement promised to ensure food and medical supplies for hundreds of thousands of stranded travelers.

Among the victims are Hu and the millions of other Chinese workers who make most of the things sold at Guangzhou's trendy Update Mall.

"I've already been waiting here for four days, and I have no idea when I'll be going," said Hu, a 35-year-old factory worker who wore a navy polyester suit and tan turtleneck for his trip home.

Workers like him leave villages to work in the factories that supply the world with everything from laptops and bicycles to jeans and cars. They are tethered to assembly lines all day and spend nights in crowded, dank dormitories.

But despite their key role in China's rip-roaring economic growth of the past 30 years, migrant workers are often despised by the locals in wealthy cities like Guangzhou - the capital of booming Guangdong province.

The semiliterate laborers can't speak the local dialect, Cantonese, and they're treated like bumpkins. Gangsters prey on them, trying to cheat them out of the money they save to send home. Some factory owners fail to pay their wages and ignore the labor law.

One of the brightest spots in the workers' dreary lives is the Lunar New Year holiday, which starts Feb. 7 this year.

Across the Globe

Mentally disabled women used in suicide bombings

BAGHDAD (AP)—Two women described as mentally disabled and strapped with remote-control explosives—and possibly used as unwitting suicide bombers—brought carnage Friday to two pet bazaars, killing at least 91 people in the deadliest day since Washington flooded the capital with extra troops last spring.

Brig. Gen. Qassim al-Moussawi, Iraq's chief military spokesman in Baghdad, said the women had Down syndrome and may not have known they were on suicide missions, but gave no further details on how authorities pieced together the evidence. He also said the bombs were detonated by remote control.

The coordinated blasts—coming 20 minutes apart in different parts of the city—appeared to reinforce U.S. claims al-Qaida in Iraq may be increasingly desperate and running short of able-bodied men willing or available for such missions.

But they also served as a reminder that Iraqi insurgents are constantly shifting their strategies in attempts to unravel recent security gains around the country. Women have been used in ever greater frequency in suicide attacks because they often encounter less scrutiny by security officials.

The twin attacks at the pet markets, however, could mark a disturbing use of unknowing agents of death.

Bolivian plane crash-lands, all survive

LA PAZ, Bolivia (AP)—A plane carrying more than 150 people crash-landed in a bog in eastern Bolivia on Friday after fierce storms turned it away from its destination and it tried to reach another airport hundreds of miles away, according to officials and news reports. All on board survived.

Photographs by local media showed the charter Boeing 727, flown by a local airline, in a flooded forest clearing, stripped of at least one wing. A set of landing gear was in the water nearby.

"We noticed the engines went out, and there was this calm," Paolo Bravo, a Bolivian senator who was on board, told the radio network Erbol.

"Then they told us, 'Crash positions! Crash positions!' and it was just another two or three seconds before we hit," he said.

"I think you could call it a belly flop," Bravo added. "The plane fell, the wings broke off, but the fuselage was OK."

AP

Local media photograph a Boeing 727, flown by Lloyd Aereo Boliviano airline, after it crashed near the eastern lowland city of Trinidad, Bolivia, Friday, Feb. 1, 2008. No deaths were reported.

Kenya rivals agree to act on violence

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—Kenya's rival sides said Friday they had agreed to take action to end monthlong violence from a disputed presidential election, but the death toll mounted when police fired on mobs setting homes and businesses ablaze in the west of the country.

Kofi Annan, the former U.N. secretary-general who is mediating, said the sides had agreed to tackle within a week the most pressing issues - including resolving the immediate political crisis. Both sides called for illegal militias to be disbanded and for the investigation of all crimes connected to the violence, including alleged excessive force by police.

"The first (step) is to take immediate action to stop the violence and restore fundamental liberties," Annan said.

A document signed by both sides said an agreement might require "adjustments" to the constitution—suggesting a power-sharing arrangement that would give opposition leader Raila Odinga a new position of prime minister.

WORLD BRIEFS

Student says he lied in Holloway case

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP)—Dutch student Joran van der Sloot denied Friday that he had anything to do with Natalee Holloway's disappearance, saying he lied when he told someone privately he was involved. The statement came hours after Aruban prosecutors announced they were reopening their investigation into the disappearance of the Alabama teenager after seeing secretly taped material from a Dutch journalist. Van der Sloot was interviewed by the respected Dutch television show "Pauw & Witteman" following reports that crime reporter Peter R. De Vries had captured him making statements about the case.

Canadian court frees al-Qaida suspect

TORONTO (AP)—A Canadian court freed suspected al-Qaida collaborator Mohamed Harkat from jail on Friday, but ordered him to remain under house arrest until his next hearing. An Algerian refugee living in Ontario since 1995, Harkat was arrested in December 2002 on suspicions that he is an Islamic extremist and member of Osama bin Laden's terrorist network. Harkat has vehemently denied the allegations. Harkat spent 3 1/2 years in an Ontario jail under Canada's controversial security certificate regime, which allows authorities to hold a detainee indefinitely without charges and lets the government keep any evidence secret.

Report: Four UN deaths preventable

OTTAWA (AP)—The deaths of four U.N. military observers during Israeli clashes with Hezbollah in Lebanon two years ago were the result of errors by Israel's military, a Canadian Forces board of inquiry found Friday. The deaths of the four from Canada, China, Austria and Finland were "tragic and preventable," the board said. The U.N. observers died when their compound was hit by a 1,100-pound bomb dropped by an Israeli aircraft. The compound was also hit by four 155-mm artillery shells fired by the Israelis during clashes with Hezbollah, the report said.

Focus

Army sees alarming rise in suicides

By DANA PRIEST
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WASHINGTON—Lt. Elizabeth Whiteside, a psychiatric outpatient at Walter Reed Army Medical Center who was waiting for the Army to decide whether to court-martial her for endangering another soldier and turning a gun on herself last year in Iraq, attempted to kill herself Monday evening. In so doing, the 25-year-old Army reservist joined a record number of soldiers who have committed or tried to commit suicide after serving in the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan.

"I'm very disappointed with the Army," Whiteside wrote in a note before swallowing dozens of psychotropic pills. "Hopefully this will help other soldiers." She was taken to the emergency room early Tuesday, and she learned yesterday that the charges against her had been dismissed.

Whiteside's personal tragedy is part of an alarming phenomenon in the Army's ranks: Suicides among active-duty soldiers in 2007 reached their highest level since the Army began keeping such records in 1980, according to a draft internal study. Last year, 121 soldiers took their own lives, nearly 20 percent more than in 2006.

At the same time, the number of attempted suicides or self-inflicted injuries in the Army has jumped sixfold since the Iraq war began. Last year, about 2,100 soldiers injured themselves or attempted suicide, compared with about 350 in 2002, according to the U.S. Army Medical Command Suicide Prevention Action Plan.

The ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have placed severe stress on the Army, caused in part by repeated and lengthened deployments. Historically, suicide rates tend to decrease when soldiers are in conflicts overseas, but that trend has reversed in recent years. From a suicide rate of 9.8 per 100,000 active-duty soldiers in 2001—the lowest rate on record—the Army reached an all-time high of 17.5 suicides per 100,000 active-duty soldiers in 2006.

Col. Elspeth Cameron Ritchie, the Army's top psychiatrist and author of the study, said that suicides and attempted suicides "are continuing to rise despite a lot of things we're doing now and have been doing." Ritchie added: "We need to improve training and education. We need to improve our capacity to provide behavioral health care."

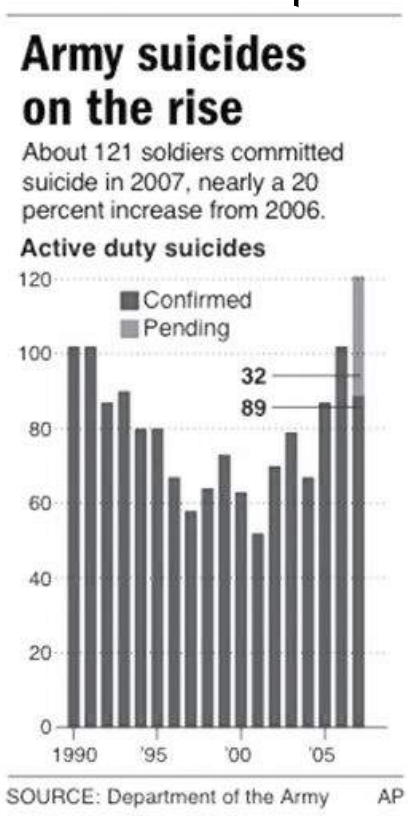
Ritchie's team conducted more than 300 interviews in the United States and overseas and found that the common factors in suicides and attempted suicides include failed personal relationships; legal, financial or occupational problems; and the frequency and length of overseas deployments. She said the Army must do a better job of making sure that troops in distress receive mental health services. "We need to know what to do when we're concerned about one of our fellows."

The study, which the Army's top personnel chief ordered six months ago, acknowledges that the Army still does not know how to adequately assess, monitor and treat soldiers with psychological problems. In fact, it says that "the current Army Suicide Prevention Program was not originally designed for a combat/deployment environment."

Staff Sgt. Gladys Santos, an Army medic who attempted suicide after three tours in Iraq, said the Army urgently needs to hire more psychiatrists and psychologists who have an understanding of war. "They gave me an 800 number to call if I needed help," she said. "When I come to feeling overwhelmed, I don't care about the 800 number. I want a one-on-one talk with a trained psychiatrist who's either been to war or understands war."

Santos, who is being treated at Walter Reed, said the only effective therapy she has received there in the past year have been the one-on-one sessions with her psychiatrist, not the group sessions in which soldiers are told "Don't hit your wife, don't hit your kids" or the other groups where they play bingo or learn how to properly set a table.

Over the past year, the Army has reinvigorated its efforts to understand mental health issues and has instituted new assessment surveys and new online videos and questionnaires to help soldiers recognize problems and become more resilient, Ritchie said. It has also hired more mental health providers. The plan calls for attaching more chaplains to deployed units and assigning "battle buddies" to improve peer support and monitoring.



Increasing suicides raise "real questions about whether you can have an Army this size with multiple deployments," said David Rudd, a former Army psychologist and chairman of the psychology department at Texas Tech University.

On Monday night, as President Bush delivered his State of the Union address and asked Congress to "improve the system of care for our wounded warriors and help them build lives of hope and promise and dignity," Whiteside was dozing off from the effects of her drug overdose. Her case highlights the Army's continuing struggles to remove the stigma surrounding mental illness and to make it easier for soldiers and officers to seek psychological help.

Whiteside, who was the subject of a Washington Post article in December, was a high-achieving University of Virginia graduate, and she earned top scores from her Army raters. But as a medic in charge of a small prison team in Iraq, she was repeatedly harassed by one of her commanders, which disturbed her greatly, according to an Army investigation.

On Jan. 1, 2007, weary from helping to quell riots in the prison after the execution of Saddam Hussein, Whiteside had a mental breakdown, according to an Army sanity board investigation. She pointed a gun at a superior, fired two shots into the ceiling and then turned the weapon on herself, piercing several organs. She has been at Walter Reed ever since.

Whiteside's two immediate commanders brought charges against her, but Maj. Gen. Eric Schoomaker, the only physician in her chain of command and then the commander of Walter Reed, recommended that the charges be dropped, citing her "demonstrably severe depression" and "7 years of credible and honorable service."

Her case hinged in part on whether her mental illness prompted her actions, as Walter Reed psychiatrists testified last month, or whether it was "an excuse" for her actions, as her company commander wrote when he proffered the original charges against her in April. Those charges included assault on a superior commissioned officer, aggravated assault, kidnapping, reckless endangerment, wrongful discharge of a firearm, communication of a threat and two attempts of intentional self-injury without intent to avoid service.

An Army hearing officer cited "Army values" and the need to do "what is right, legally and morally" when he recommended last month that Whiteside not face court-martial or other administration punishment, but that she be discharged and receive the medical benefits "she will desperately need for the remainder of her life." Whiteside decided to speak publicly about her case only after a soldier she had befriended at the hospital's psychiatric ward hanged herself after she was discharged without benefits.

But the U.S. Army Military District of Washington, which has ultimate legal jurisdiction over the case, declined for weeks to tell Whiteside whether others in her chain of command have concurred or differed with the hearing officer, said Matthew MacLean, Whiteside's civilian attorney and a former military lawyer.

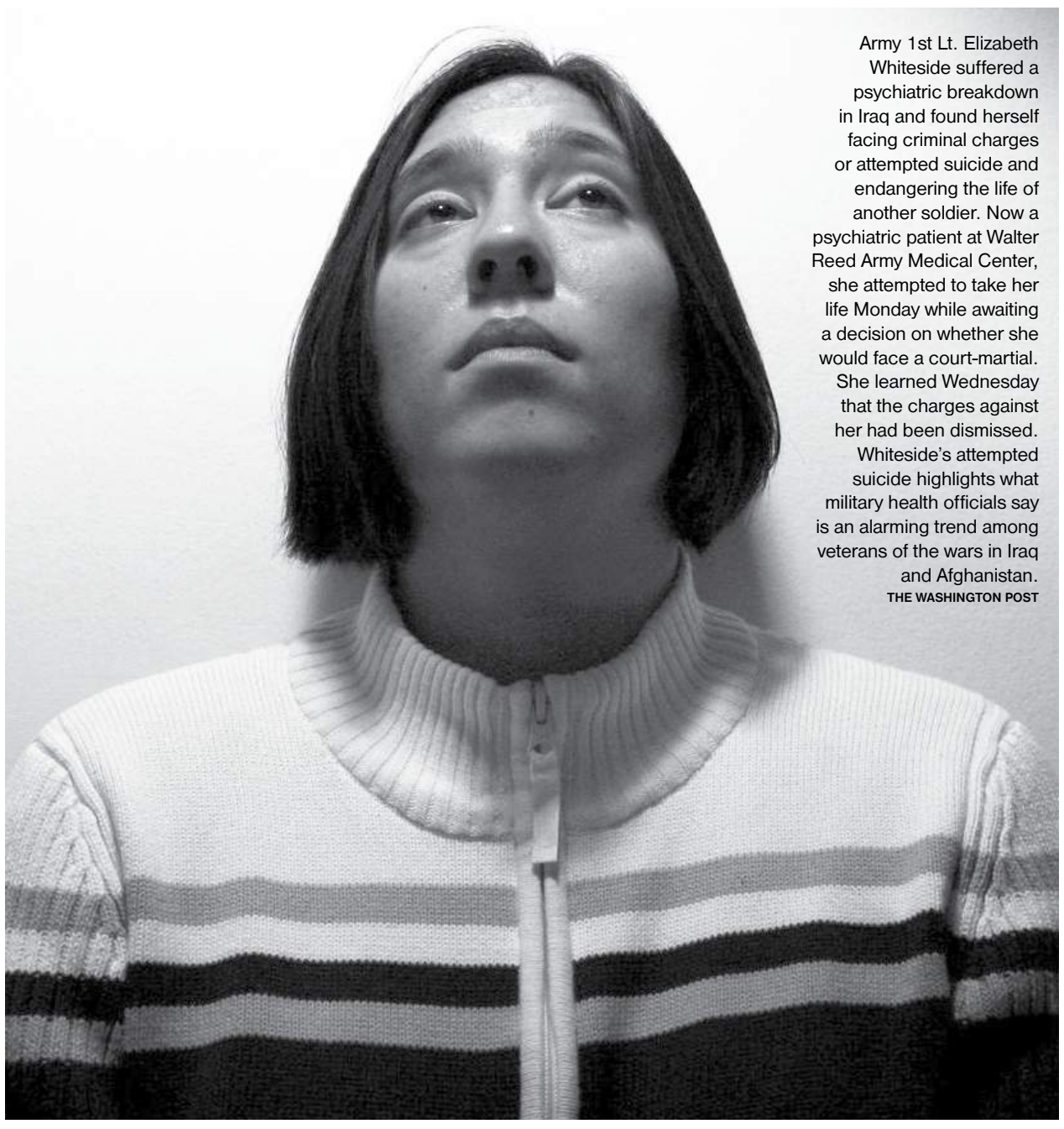
MacLean and Whiteside's father, Thomas Whiteside, said the uncertainty took its toll on the young officer's mental state. "I've never seen anything like this. It's just so far off the page," said Thomas Whiteside, his voice cracking with emotion. "I told her, `If you check out of here, you're not going to be able to help other soldiers.' "

Whiteside recently had begun to take prerequisite classes for a nursing degree, and her mental stability seemed to be improving, her father said. Then late last week she told him she was having trouble sleeping, with a possible court-martial weighing on her. On Monday night she asked her father to take her back to her room at Walter Reed so she could study.

She swallowed her pills there. A soldier and his wife, who live next door, came to her room and, after a while, noticed that she was becoming groggy, Thomas Whiteside said. When they returned later and she would not open the door, they called hospital authorities.

Yesterday, after having spent two nights in the intensive care unit, he said, his daughter was transferred to the psychiatric ward.

Whiteside left two notes, one titled "Business," in which her top concern was the fate of her dog. "Appointment for the Vetenarian is in my blue book. Additional paperwork on Chewy is in the closet at the apartment in a folder." On her second note, she penned a postscript: "Sorry to do this to my family + friends. I love you."



Army 1st Lt. Elizabeth Whiteside suffered a psychiatric breakdown in Iraq and found herself facing criminal charges or attempted suicide and endangering the life of another soldier. Now a psychiatric patient at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, she attempted to take her life Monday while awaiting a decision on whether she would face a court-martial. She learned Wednesday that the charges against her had been dismissed. Whiteside's attempted suicide highlights what military health officials say is an alarming trend among veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.
THE WASHINGTON POST

Staff writer Anne Hull contributed to this report.

Life & Style

Street dancers kick off Brazil's carnival madness

A dancer performs during the parade of Academicos do Tucuruvi samba school in Sao Paulo, Saturday, Feb. 2, 2008.
AP

AP
A drummer performs during the parade of Academicos do Tucuruvi samba school in Sao Paulo, Saturday, Feb. 2, 2008.

By MICHAEL ASTOR
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AP)—To the sound of blasting samba, men dressed as nuns swilled beer and danced down the cobblestone streets of a Rio hillside Friday night to kick off five days of uninhibited carnival madness in Brazil.

Dutch tourist Drey Urhahn watched in awe from a sidewalk in the historic Santa Teresa neighborhood as hundreds of members of the Carmelitas street samba group danced by him in flip-flops and black-and-white habits to thundering rhythms from a drum corps backed by a booming brass band.

"It's like a well-oiled machine," said Urhahn, 34, as he downed an ice-cold beer on a balmy Rio night after days of pre-carnival partying. "The sun, the naked women, it's crazy. I was drinking for a few days, so when it started, I was already exhausted, but the Brazilians keep going."

From Salvador and Recife in the north to the southern metropolitan sprawl of Sao Paulo, Brazilians staged elaborate parades led by topless dancing beauties and massive street parties fueled by bands atop tractor-trailer trucks rumbling slowly through city streets.

Rio's big carnival action comes on Sunday and Monday nights, when the city's top 12 samba schools mount 80-minute spectacles at the 88,500-capacity Sambadrome, featuring hundreds of drummers, thousands of dancers and about a dozen over-the-top parade floats.

But until then, street carnival groups—called "blocos"—own Rio's neighborhoods. As 80 drummers decked out in pink and green marched their way through the bohemian neighborhood of Lapa late Friday, a nearly naked women danced the samba behind them, emptying bars as men spilled into the street to shimmy behind her.

The madness in the streets has gotten so severe that some blocos have started keeping the time and location of their parades secret, to thin massive crowds.

"Every year, more and more blocos pop up spontaneously, so many that most of the e-mails I receive these days are complaining about how there are too many," said Rio de Janeiro Mayor Cesar Maia.

For some the craziness is too much, and many well-heeled Rio residents flee before it starts. Even Maia officially opened the carnival on Tuesday, while hardly anyone was partying, so he could jet to France for vacation.

The Sambadrome competition seems like anarchy, but it is actually a hard-fought competition as each group vies to be declared the year's champion.

That distinction brings little more than bragging rights, but because a single flaw in costumes, floats or dancing can doom a group's chance of winning, the parade at times seems tense.

At the bloco parties, anything goes—making them more and more popular because fans can join in.

Cordao de Bola Preta, one of the city's most traditional bloco carnival groups, expects some 600,000 people to turn out for their parade Saturday morning, more than the 400,000 who showed up last year.

"In reality, what we do is more like standing than parading, but we are a very democratic band and we always do our best to please the crowd," said Pedro Ernesto Araujo Marinho, Bola Preta's vice president.

Sometimes there are so many revelers, it is hard to hear the music, and Marinho concedes that if crowds continue to grow, they might have to do something to stem the tide.

One of the city's most popular blocos—known as "Suvaco de Cristo," or Christ's Armpit, because members parade in the shadow of Rio's mountaintop statue of Christ the Redeemer—solved the problem by not announcing when they intend to march.

"It was a very serious problem the year before last, when we had 50,000 people in the streets. It made for an interminable parade," said Joao Regazzi Avelleira, the carnival group's president. This year, he expects 10,000 to 15,000 people.

The Carmelitas group also kept the location of their street party secret, but Liz Desantis, 26, of San Diego, California, managed to get to the hillside in time to see old and young men gyrating to samba in their nun getups.

"It's just mayhem, a crazy party, tons of people," she said.

THREE WISE GUYS

Advice on Smelly, Grumpy, Sneezy

By JOE HEIM, JUSTIN RUDE, DAN ZAK
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Dear Wise Guys:

My fiance is under the impression that the bathroom fan is only a stink-eliminating device, whereas I think its purpose is to get rid of excess steam from the shower, with no anti-odorous qualities. What's the bathroom fan really supposed to be used for?— Steph

Dan: White noise. In most half-bathrooms, the fan is there to mask any noise associated with bodily functions. As for full baths with tubs or showers, some fans do double duty: noise masking and steam removing. No bathroom fan I've seen has enough suck to eliminate a good stink.

Justin: Not so fast. According to Larry Johnson, of Washington-area remodelers Globe Bath and Kitchen, a properly installed bathroom fan "should be vented to the exterior and not only provide a means to move odors but also pull out humidity." You might want to see if your fan is installed properly, Dan.

■ ■ ■

Dear Wise Guys:

I got married last summer (to a perfectly great guy). The other night my husband was grumpy because he was in bed and I wasn't. My mother told me that husbands are always grumpy. A few guys at work confirmed that when I told them. They laughed and said everyone knows that and they would have told me if asked.

I've now heard several rationales from other guys in the office on said topic. However, they are not "very good-looking" men getting paid to answer these questions. So my questions are: Why are all husbands grumpy, and why didn't I know this before I got married?—Danna

Joe: Well, if he was in bed and you weren't I can think of at least one reason he might be grumpy. But as a rule, I don't think marriage leads to immediate grumpiness in husbands. That has to be earned over the years and exhibited only to the degree that your wife sees it less as grumpiness than as charming crankiness. Clearly your husband thinks he can skip these formative years, but you need to disabuse him of this notion. Tell him to stop whining.

■ ■ ■

Dear Wise Guys,

How can you sneeze when you are sound asleep?—Sondra

Joe: Um, you can't. And we've got that on good authority. "I've never heard of that," says James Yan, medical director of the National Capital Sleep Center at Suburban Hospital in Bethesda, Md. "Sneezing is not automatic like breathing. You have to make an effort to sneeze."

We trust Dr. Yan, but, hey, if you want to experiment, we suggest dusting your sleeping partner's nose with a little pepper to see whether sneezing and staying asleep is possible. Of course, they may find this very annoying. Let us know how that works out.

AP

Heath Ledger, right, and Michelle Williams arrive for the Australian premier of the movie "Brokeback Mountain" in Melbourne, Australia, in this Tuesday Jan. 10, 2006 file photo.

Michelle Williams: 'My heart is broken'

NEW YORK (AP)—Michelle Williams ended her silence Friday, saying her "heart is broken" over the death of "Brokeback Mountain" actor Heath Ledger. The 27-year-old actress and Ledger became a couple during filming of 2005's "Brokeback," in which they costarred as husband and wife. They later moved to New York, and had a daughter, Matilda, born October 2005.

"Please respect our need to grieve privately," Williams said in a statement. "My heart is broken. I am the mother of the most tender-hearted, high-spirited, beautiful little girl who is the spitting image of her father. All that I can cling to is his presence inside her that reveals itself every day."

Before they split last year, Ledger and Williams lived together in Brooklyn's quiet, tree-lined Boerum Hill neighborhood. Last week, well-wishers left bouquets of flowers outside the four-story, sage-green brownstone with a black wrought-iron fence.

"His family and I watch Matilda as she whispers to trees, hugs animals, and takes steps two at a time, and we know that he is with us still," Williams said. "She will be brought up in the best memories of him."

Ledger, 28, died in his Manhattan apartment Jan. 22. Authorities suspect a possible drug overdose, but the cause of his death is still pending the outcome of toxicology tests. Police said several prescription drugs were found in the Manhattan apartment where the actor's body was found.

Williams, who also played Jen Lindley on TV's "Dawson's Creek," was nominated for a supporting-actress Oscar for her "Brokeback" role. When Ledger died, Williams and Matilda were in Trollhattan, Sweden, where she had been shooting scenes for the upcoming film "Mammoth."

Though she was soon spotted returning to the Brooklyn home where the couple once lived together, she managed to dodge reporters and steer mostly clear of camera crews, and chose to stay silent until Friday's statement.

Women holding up well with this look

By ERIN WEINGER
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Victoria Beckham dons a Dior pair on the cover of Elle, while Keira Knightley wears the same ones on the cover of Interview, and Kate Hudson sports them in the pages of January Vogue.

Suspenders, no longer simply a quirky hipster accessory, have gone legit.

It's pretty amazing for a look that barely scratched the spring catwalk's surface except at Dior, where suspenders accented Marlene Dietrich-inspired, full-legged trousers.

The truth is, suspenders came into their own by filtering up from the streets, not down from the runways. Last year, Mischa Barton wore them everywhere, along with DJ Samantha Ronson and modeling phenom Agyness Deyn (who might just be, thanks to her quirky and influential wardrobe, the next Kate Moss). Now that suspenders are receiving a more refined presentation, they're more likely to be found on the Sartorialist Web site than on Cobrasnake. But that doesn't mean that everyone who's reading Elle and Interview should attempt the temperamental look. For those willing to give the look a go, there are suspenders at every price point: H&M makes skinny ones in basic black and blue ($12.90), or you can spend all the way up to a brown leather pair by Robert Geller ($198).

Wardrobe stylist Ilaria Urbinati agrees. Having costumed Season 2 of "The L Word," she's no slouch at androgynous dress but cautions would-be wearers against errors that are likely to draw snickers. "I've been wearing suspenders my entire life," she says. "But it's a hard look to pull off." We enlisted Urbinati's wisdom to make it easy.

Because suspenders make such a loud statement, Urbinati says that the surrounding outfit should stay sparse. "The simpler the better," she says. Celebrities usually overdo it. "It tends to look ridiculous because they're trying to be too sexy and serious. They don't understand that suspenders are simple and fun." Last spring, Fergie added a fedora, Wayfarer sunglasses and a scarf to her denim suspender ensemble, which created a look that belonged in trend rehab. For a summer appearance on MTV's "TRL," the singer again sported suspender overalls but lost the heavy accessories -- and the desperation that went with them.

"If you wear them with too many men's pieces, it's too costume-like." Urbinati advises suspender wearers to go easy on male accoutrements such as vests to avoid looking like Oliver Twist or Tom Sawyer. Another major faux pas is letting one or both straps hang down. "No. Unless you want to look like Marky Mark. (The look) can't be hip-hop; it's more Hedi Slimane and Dior."

"All of my fashion friends started wearing them," Urbinati says (which is a good sign, given her chic inner circle). "I love them with high-waisted pants. Denim is the best way to go. And they look good with a T-shirt and a tuxedo blazer too." Slouchy dress pants are also a stylish way to inject the suspender with some old-school charm. But dress pants don't necessarily mean dressing up. "I don't love suspenders for anything fancy. They're fun and cheeky." Footwear can stump even seasoned style-makers when it comes to suspenders. "Unless you're super avant garde, forget the high-top Nikes. With suspenders, I usually like flats better than heels. But if you're doing a cool trouser, heels are fine." We vow not to mix our eco-friendly Air Jordans with suspenders.

Having picked up many pairs of suspenders at vintage stores and discount chains such as Forever 21, she suggests shoppers go for cheap or high-end. "It isn't worth it to do the in-between." And what is go-to style when it comes to elastic? "Skinny black ones. ... Suspenders always feel cartoonish in colors."

Long and skinny vintage suspenders pair well with denim.
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Jury acquits Wesley Snipes of tax fraud

OCALA, Fla. (AP)—Action star Wesley Snipes was found not guilty of federal tax-fraud and conspiracy charges Friday, but was convicted on three misdemeanor counts of failing to file a tax return.

Snipes had faced up to 16 years in prison if convicted on all charges, but can now only get up to three years. The "Blade" star and two co-defendants had been indicted in 2006 after Snipes stopped paying, using tax protest arguments long rejected by the courts.

Snipes sat emotionless as his verdict was read, then nodded in relief. He refused to talk with reporters after the verdict, and is still liable for millions in taxes likely to be pursued in civil court.

"Mr. Snipes has always been committed to doing the right thing, and after this trial is over he'll make whatever amends are required," defense attorney Robert Bernhoft said. "But this is a man of integrity."

Snipes' lawyers argued that he was a victim of crooked advisers, and the jury seemed to believe it. Co-defendants Eddie Ray Kahn, the founder of a tax protest group, and Douglas P. Rosile, an accountant who lost his licenses, were convicted Friday by the same panel of tax fraud and conspiracy. Both face up to 10 years in prison.

The government said Snipes failed to file tax returns from 1999 to 2004, a period in which he signed two contracts for more than $10 million on sequels in the "Blade" trilogy.

The actor, who also appeared in "White Men Can't Jump," is among the most famous targets of an IRS criminal investigation, and his prosecution was key for the government.

AP

Wesley Snipes gives a thumbs up to the media as he leaves U.S. Federal Court in Ocala, Fla., Thursday, Jan. 31, 2008, where a jury is deliberating in his tax-fraud trial.

"We thought there was sufficient evidence for a conviction on all counts, but obviously the jury disagreed," U.S. Attorney Robert O'Neill said.

Snipes used bizarre arguments to justify his position, saying the IRS' own code meant income earned in this country wasn't taxable, and the agency had no legal authority because it's not a proper government entity.

Later, the actor threatened the government and individual agents in his pursuit, declaring himself a "nonresident alien" not subject to tax laws.

Prosecutors say Snipes paid taxes in the 1990s, but changed his mind after meeting Kahn in 2000. He allegedly stopped filing returns, illegally sought $11 million in 1996 and 1997 taxes paid and drew fake checks to pay the U.S. Treasury.

Kahn founded the central Florida tax protest group American Rights Litigators and its successor, Guiding Light of God Ministries. He has been using tax scams since at least the early 1980s, according to government documents, and refused to defend himself in court against these charges.

Rosile, a CPA who lost his licenses in Florida and Ohio, allegedly prepared the fraudulent documents for Snipes, along with numerous other Kahn clients.

Judge and jury have long rejected their ideas, but there were exceptions.

The IRS bears a unique burden of proof in criminal tax cases. It must show not only that someone broke the law, but he or she did so with willful, bad purpose to defraud the government.

A few defendants have won acquittal because the jury thought they sincerely believed they did not have to pay.

Court: Spears' dad has temporary control

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Throughout the course of Britney Spears' months-long emotional tailspin, one universal question has lingered with each spectacular turn: Why doesn't her family take drastic measures to stop this? On Friday, they did.

Spears' father, James Spears, was put in charge of the troubled pop star's welfare during a surprise court appearance by him and mother Lynne Spears, a day after their daughter was whisked to a hospital for a psychiatric evaluation.

Just as Spears' immediate family was taking charge of her life, Sam Lutfi, the man seen escorting her about town and sometimes speaking on her behalf, was removed from the picture with a restraining order. A message left on Lutfi's cell phone seeking comment was not immediately returned.

James Spears' eyes grew teary when he was named conservator of his daughter. He and an attorney, Andrew Wallet, were named conservators of the estate. The parents sat with attorney Blair Berk throughout the hearing, smiling and embracing after the announcement.

The events of the past two days were the first positive signs that Spears may have reached a turning point in a downward spiral of bizarre behavior—all of it captured by paparazzi lenses—that has resulted in her losing custody of and visitation rights with her two young sons.

Spears was taken early Thursday by paramedics with a heavy police escort to UCLA Medical Center's psychiatric hospital. There was no account or description of the young star's actual condition during the hearing.

It was the second hospitalization this year for the 26-year-old singer, who has exhibited odd behavior since November 2006, when she filed for divorce from Kevin Federline, the father of their sons, 1-year-old Jayden James and 2-year-old Sean Preston.

A court creates conservatorships when it determines that a person cannot care for themselves or handle their affairs. Commissioner Reva Goetz said Spears would be under conservatorship until Monday, at which time another hearing would be held.

"It is in the best interests of the conservatee to have conservatorship over her person," Goetz told a packed courtroom.

As conservator, her father will have the power to "restrict visitors," have around-the-clock security for Spears and have access to all medical records, Goetz said. It was unclear whether the court gave her father the power to make medical decisions on Spears' behalf; even if that was granted, the role can be limited.

Conservators can consult with doctors on medication options, but the patient can refuse. Only in emergencies can someone be forcefully treated. Otherwise, a court hearing must be scheduled to hammer out the issue.

"Being a conservator does not give them the power to force medication," said Nancy Kincaid, a spokeswoman with the California Department of Mental Health.

The court also issued a restraining order against Lutfi, Spears' sometime manager and friend, and gave her father permission to change the locks on her estate and remove anyone who is there.

AP

In a file photo Britney Spears arrives for a post Grammy Awards party at a private residence Feb. 8, 2006, in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Goetz said conservatorship over the estate was "necessary and appropriate." She gave approval for the conservator to "take all actions to secure all liquid assets including credit cards."

Dr. Mark Goulston, a Los Angeles psychiatrist who is not involved in the case, said he was not surprised by the ruling, given Spears' increasingly erratic behavior and what appear to have been periodic and unsuccessful efforts at rehabilitation.

Although placing people in conservatorships is not unusual, Goulston said, courts usually look long and hard at the evidence before putting a person in one.

"You have to really make a case before someone is allowed to become a conservator, so I would conclude her judgment is fairly impaired," he said.

FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY

We, the family of the late

†Cpl. Lee Roy Apatang Camacho

invite all our families, relatives, and friends to join us in prayer as we commemorate the first year anniversary of our dear beloved.

Daily Mass will be offered at Mount Carmel Cathedral of the following dates

Friday, February 01	**6:00AM**
Saturday, February 02	**6:00AM**
Sunday, February 03	**9:00AM**
Monday, February 04	**6:00AM**
Tuesday, February 05	**6:00AM**
Wednesday, February 06	**6:00AM**
Thursday, February 07	**6:00AM**
Friday, February 08	**6:00AM**

On the final day, Saturday, February 09, 2008, Mass will be said at 6:00AM followed by breakfast at Joeten DaiDai Social Hall.

Thank you and Dankulu Na Si Yu'us Ma'ase.

From
Velma M. Camacho and Children

Eva Mendes in treatment for 'issues'

AP

Actress Eva Mendes poses for pictures at the opening of the new Dolce and Gabbana women's store on Madison Avenue, in this, Dec. 3, 2007, file photo in New York.

NEW YORK (AP)—Eva Mendes has "issues."

"Eva has been working hard for the past year and made a positive decision to take some much-needed time off to proactively attend to some personal issues that, while not critical, she felt deserved some outside professional support," the 31-year-old actress' publicist, Brad Cafarelli, said Friday in a statement.

The celebrity Web site TMZ reported Friday that Mendes had checked into a Utah rehab center for substance abuse.

Mendes' screen credits include "Training Day," "2 Fast 2 Furious," "Hitch" and "Ghost Rider."

Kardashian to skip Reggie-less Bowl

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP)—Reality starlet Kim Kardashian is making sure she goes to all the big events happening Super Bowl week - except the big game itself.

Kardashian told The Associated Press on Friday that she won't be watching the New England Patriots battle the New York Giants on Sunday because her beau, New Orleans Saints star player Reggie Bush, won't be on the field.

"We're not going - we have other things to do," said Kardashian, as Bush stood nearby at the Hanes Style Villa, a celebrity gifting suite (the pair picked up diamond-studded Haimov watches among other freebies).

"Since Reggie's not in the Super Bowl, there's no reason to watch," she said.

Kardashian, who stars in the E! network show "Keeping Up With the Kardashians," admitted that she has never been huge football fan anyway—but has gotten into the game since hooking up with Bush.

"I'm not really a sports girl," she said. "But I sit with all the wives and they know everything and I don't so they are teaching me, and I'm learning a lot about it, so I'm loving it."

Still, she's not likely to turn on a game featuring any other team but Bush's Saints.

"I don't really watch it if he's not playing," she said. "I'm not that big of a football fan yet."

Spice Girls concerts canceled

LONDON (AP)—The Spice Girls have dropped Australia, China, South Africa and Argentina from their world tour, which reportedly has been drawing a disappointing turnout at some concerts.

The group, which reunited in a blaze of publicity last June, said on Friday that the tour will now end in Toronto on Feb. 26.

"Sadly the tour needs to come to an end by the end of February due to family and personal commitments for Emma, Geri, Mel B, Melanie C and Victoria," the group said in a statement.

The Spice Girls' tour kicked off in Vancouver, Canada, on Dec. 2, and has also included stops in Britain, the United States, Spain and Germany.

The concerts being canceled were to be held in the cities of Sydney, Beijing, Cape Town and Buenos Aires, the statement said.

AP

The Spice Girls, from left, Melanie Brown, Emma Bunton, Geri Halliwell Melanie Chishlom and Victoria Beckham pose in the backstage prior to the start of the Roberto Cavalli Fall/Winter 2008/2009 men's collection, in Milan, Italy, in this Jan. 14, 2008, file photo.

Big numbers for Clinton, Obama debate

NEW YORK (AP)—An estimated 8.3 million television viewers watched Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama debate Thursday night in California, more than double the audience for Republican candidates the night before.

The CNN audience for Clinton and Obama's debate, the first one-on-one contest for Democrats now that John Edwards has dropped out, was second only to the 9.4 million people who watched the Democrats on ABC Jan. 5, according to Nielsen Media Research.

CNN also televised a Republican debate Wednesday night, highlighted by contentious exchanges between John McCain and Mitt Romney, that was watched by 4 million viewers, Nielsen said.

The Democratic debate eclipsed, by far, any other political debate ever shown just on cable television. The previous high was the Democratic debate in South Carolina on Jan. 21, seen by 4.9 million people.

William Turner, street performer, holds fake cobra snakes and banners in support of Democratic presidential hopefuls Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., and Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., before a Democratic presidential debate at the Kodak Theater in Los Angeles Thursday, Jan. 31, 2008.

AP

Gentle nudge has not worked to dislodge mom from house

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married five years. My husband's stepdad died two years ago. After the funeral we offered to have his mother come live with us until she got back on her feet.

Well, it has been two years, and she's still here. She doesn't help out with the expenses, although she is able to, and has made no plans to move. We have raised the subject, but she says that she's in the midst of writing a book and wants to see if it will sell before she decides what to do. She's constantly in the house and goes nowhere on her own. My husband and I are her only form of entertainment.

On top of that, we're expecting our first child. I wanted my husband and I and our baby to bond as a family before anyone else was in the picture, but that's not going to happen now. Am I selfish to want to be alone with my husband and baby?

How can we make her see that she has overstayed her welcome? Fear of being alone is what's stopping her from leaving. But she can't expect to live here indefinitely. This has put a strain on our marriage. My husband agrees with me, but we see no way out of this situation. We want his mom to be OK, so we don't have the heart to kick her out. But isn't it time for her to stand on her own?

Our marriage is being destroyed because of this, and we're desperate for guidance.

HOPELESS DOWN SOUTH

DEAR HOPELESS: If you and your husband want your lives back, the two of you are going to have to stage an "intervention" with his mother. Script it ahead of time if necessary. Although the conversation may not be pleasant, nothing will change unless you have it.

Your mother-in-law may need psychological and spiritual guidance to work her way through the period of mourning that she has postponed by moving in with you. If she's ever to have a life of her own, she must move out and cultivate relationships instead of relying so heavily on you.

Begin by investigating retirement communities in your area, and set a firm deadline for her to move. You have been more than generous, so please do not feel guilty about it.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am 18 and a high school graduate. I decided to attend an online university and have come to realize that this was a huge mistake. Now I am under extreme pressure from my family to correct the mistake by either getting into a different school or getting a job.

The problem is, I do not wish to attend a university in the U.S.A. I would like to study abroad. Whenever I mention this to my family, they laugh in my face.

My family crushed every dream I've had for as long as I can remember, and I'm asking for advice on how to avoid it this time and find the strength within myself to go against what they want.

BROKEN DREAMER, SPRINGFIELD, TENN.

DEAR BROKEN DREAMER: Your next step should be to visit your nearest public library and ask the librarian to help you research scholastic scholarships at universities that offer study programs abroad. Perhaps when your family sees how serious you are about it, they will then take you more seriously. Assuming that you have the grades to qualify, you may not need your family's financial help to pursue your dream.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

As added service to our valued customers, you may now submit all your JVA placements for announcement/publication in *Saipan Tribune's* print and online edition and KZMI/KCNM at the same time. No more worries of having to go to two different locations every time you need to place job vacancy announcements. Special rates are available for JVA customers under this arrangement.

Print*	
• 1st position	$10
• 2nd position	$3
• Succeeding positions	$1

Combo (Print and Online)*	
• 1st position	$13
• 2nd position	$4
• Succeeding positions	$2

Radio (KCNM/KZMI)	
• Up to 6 positions	$5
• More than 6 positions	$10

LOWER RATES! Effective Feb. 3, 2007

*These rates apply to all vacancy announcements that include corresponding benefits and which announcements are all under the same company name.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Job Vacancy Announcements

Monday Through Friday Issues: All ads placed before 12 noon will come out the next publication date.

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.
- KCNM/KZMI: All ads placed on Friday (9am to 5pm) will be for Monday's radio announcement.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

FOR RENT RESIDENTIAL

Apartment For Rent (in Beach Road, Garapan) One (1) Bedroom fully furnished with back-up generator and 24 hour water, washer & dryer facilities in the building. For inquiries, pls. call 322-6183

House for lease, 53+ years. Newly renovated 2BR/1BA in Fina Sisu near NMC. Asking $115K. Contact Scott or Melinda Crockett, 234-5260 or 788-1834. Call for appointment.

Apartment room for rent: Fully furnished 1 brm, T/B, 24-hr water $210/month, near Conwood | Tel. 287-1372, 235-6748

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 TEACHER (SUN 1538)
Salary:$2,983.33/monthly. Benefits: Workers compensation & health insurance. Contact: Saipan International School @288-9660.

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (SUN 1539)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: ILC Corporation dba Ladera Int'l School of Saipan @288-2006.

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1 COLLECTOR (SUN 1540)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; workmen's compensation/Alien medical. Contact: United Pacific Collection Agency @235-2000.

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1 MECHANIC (SUN 1541)
Salary:$3.05-$5.27/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation insurance. Contact: Pacific Marine & Industrial Corporation @322-6181.

NEW Rattan Furniture
FOR SALE
Expensive material
Call 235-4791,
433-9616, 285-7446

$200 REWARD FOR LOST WALLET

Brown wallet lost within the vicinity of Tony Roma's, Garapan on January 25, 2008 around 5 a.m. Important documents like entry permit (#156077) and drivers license (#12222003) needed to be returned to owner. Reward of $200 will be given. No questions asked.

If found or any information, please call 285-4469.

1 LOGISTICS SUPERINTENDENT (SUN 1542)
Salary:$3.05-$5.38/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation insurance. Contact: Pacific Marine & Industrial Corporation @322-6181.

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1 OPERATIONS MANAGER (SUN 1543)
Salary:$1,800.00-$2,000.00/monthly. Benefits: Employer provided housing free; employee provided food; workers compensation & medical. Contact: Okada Corporation dba Real Estate Management @287-2588.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (SUN 1544)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Free housing; free food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Victor S. Lifoifoi @287-5436.

1 SALES SUPERVISOR (SUN 1545)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Free housing; free food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Victor S. Lifoifoi @287-5436.

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1 MANAGER, (TOUR SALES) (SUN 1546)
Salary:$650.00-$800.00/monthly. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation provided. Contact: Young Shin Corporation dba Green Line Tour @483-3332.

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2 MASSEUSE/MASSEUR (SUN 1547)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation provided. Contact: Dani Corporation dba Sabana II @233-2058.

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1 WATCH REPAIRER (SUN 1548)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employer to provide housing at a charge $100.00/monthly; employer to provide food at a charge $100.00/monthly; free transportation; free medical expenses & free workers compensation. Contact: B&G Ent., Corporation @234-6829.

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (SUN 1549)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; 3x a day food; workmen's compensation & medical are free. Contact: RDA Enterprise, Inc. dba Mary's Bakery @234-6694.

1 COOK (SUN 1550)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Free housing; free food; workmen's compensation & medical are free. Contact: RDA Enterprise, Inc. dba Mary's Bakery @234-6694.

5 BAKER (SUN 1551)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Free housing; free food; workmen's compensation & medical are free. Contact: RDA Enterprise, Inc. dba Mary's Bakery @234-6694.

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1 GENERAL MANAGER (SUN 1552)
Salary:$1,750.00/monthly. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical expenses to be provided by company on all work related sickness & workmen's compensation insurance. Contact: Mugen Corporation @323-9238.

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1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (SUN 1553)
Salary:$4.20/hour. Benefits: Employer provided housing; self provided food; workmen compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Pacific Blue Corporation dba PC Outlet CNMI @233-0168.

1 SYSTEM ANALYST PROG. (SUN 1554)
Salary:$8.25/hour. Benefits: Employer provided housing; workmen compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Pacific Blue Corporation dba PC Outlet CNMI @233-0168.

1 ACCOUNTANT (SUN 1555)
Salary:$4.00/hour. Benefits: Employer provided housing; workmen compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Pacific Blue Corporation dba PC Outlet CNMI @233-0168.

1 ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN (SUN 1556)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employer provided housing; workmen compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Pacific Blue Corporation dba PC Outlet CNMI @233-0168.

1 SALES SUPERVISOR (SUN 1557)
Salary:$4.00/hour. Benefits: Employer provided housing; workmen compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Pacific Blue Corporation dba PC Outlet CNMI @233-0168.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (SUN 1558)
Salary:$4.05/hour. Benefits: $100.00/monthly charge housing; $100.00/monthly charge food & medical. Contact: Lee. Chong Nam @322-5578/483-3636.

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1 GEN. BLDG. MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (SUN 1559)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Workmans compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Luzviminda F. Arriola dba PKCL Enterprises @256-3864.

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1 VENDOR (SUN 1560)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; provide own food; workmen's compensation & medical. Contact: Josemary T. Tumaquip dba TC BBQ Stand/TC Services Ent., @287-3170/789-7605.

1 MAINTENANCE (SUN 1561)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; provide own food; workmen's compensation & medical. Contact: Josemary T. Tumaquip dba TC BBQ Stand/TC Services Ent., @287-3170/789-7605.

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1 ACCOUNTANT (SUN 1561)
Salary:$4.70/hour. Benefits: Company provided housing; medical provided & workers compensation provided. Contact: Japan Water Systems CNMI Corp. dba JWS Saipan @322-8602.

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1 CARPENTER (SUN 1562)
Salary:$3.55-$3.75/hour. Benefits: Free housing; employee provides food; medical expenses & workers compensation. Contact: Sablan Enterprises Inc. @234-2585.

1 ACCOUNTANT (SUN 1563)
Salary:$3.55-$5.75/hour. Benefits: Free housing; employee provides food; medical expenses & workers compensation. Contact: Sablan Enterprises Inc. @234-2585.

1 MASON (SUN 1564)
Salary:$3.55-$3.75/hour. Benefits: Free housing; employee provides food; medical expenses & workers compensation. Contact: Sablan Enterprises Inc. @234-2585.

1 HOLLOW BLOCK MAKER (SUN 1565)
Salary:$3.55-$3.75/hour. Benefits: Free housing; employee provides food; medical expenses & workers compensation. Contact: Sablan Enterprises Inc. @234-2585.

1 MAINTENANCE, BLDG. REPAIRER (SUN 1566)
Salary:$3.55-$3.75/hour. Benefits: Free housing; employee provides food; medical expenses & workers compensation. Contact: Sablan Enterprises Inc. @234-2585.

1 PAINTER (SUN 1567)
Salary:$3.55-$3.75/hour. Benefits: Free housing; employee provides food; medical expenses & workers compensation. Contact: Sablan Enterprises Inc. @234-2585.

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235-NEWS

Mets, Santana agree to $150.75M contract

NEW YORK (AP)—Johan Santana is a money pitcher, and the New York Mets are paying for it. Santana and the Mets agreed Friday to a $137.5 million, six-year contract, a record for a pitcher and the last major step needed to complete the team's blockbuster trade with Minnesota.

After the sides were granted an extra two hours to work on a deal, the Mets announced about 30 minutes before the new 7 p.m. EST deadline that negotiations had concluded. The two-time Cy Young Award winner was scheduled to take a physical Saturday.

Terms of the agreement were disclosed by a baseball official with knowledge of the talks who spoke on condition of anonymity because no announcement had been made. The deal includes an $18.75 million option for 2014 with a $5.5 million buyout that could make the contract worth $150.75 million over seven seasons.

The acquisition of Santana for four prospects gives New York the durable ace it has sorely lacked while chasing a pennant the past two years.

The Mets came within one win of the World Series in 2006 despite an injury-depleted pitching staff, then missed the playoffs last season after blowing a seven-game lead in the NL East with 17 to play.

Now, New York is a National League favorite again. As long as players in the trade pass physicals, Santana will lead a rotation that includes three-time Cy Young Award winner Pedro Martinez, crafty right-hander Orlando Hernandez and a pair of 15-game winners from last season: John Maine and Oliver Perez.

The lineup includes 2007 All-Stars David Wright, Jose Reyes and Carlos Beltran, plus veteran sluggers Carlos Delgado and Moises Alou. Hard-throwing closer Billy Wagner anchors the bullpen.

Santana is 93-44 with a 3.22 ERA in eight major league seasons, winning the AL Cy Young Award in 2004 and 2006 with the Twins. He has been less successful in the playoffs, going 1-3 with a 3.97 ERA.

The left-hander slipped a bit last year, finishing with a 15-13 record that included marks of 0-5 against AL Central champion Cleveland and 1-3 vs. Detroit. He dropped seven of his final 11 decisions as his ERA rose from 2.60 to 3.33 ERA, his highest since 2001. He also allowed a career-high 33 homers—most in the AL.

"He's good but he's not unbeatable. He got hit around last year," said pitcher Tim Hudson of the Atlanta Braves, one of the Mets' chief rivals in the NL East along with Philadelphia. "We've just got to be concerned about ourselves. We can't be consumed by what anyone else does."

Santana's contract topped the previous mark for pitchers, set when Barry Zito received a $126 million, seven-year deal from the San Francisco Giants last offseason. Santana was due $13.25 million in the final year of his contract with the Twins, and would have been eligible for free agency after the World Series.

The only players with larger packages are New York Yankees third baseman Alex Rodriguez ($275 million), Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter ($189 million), Boston outfielder Manny Ramirez ($160 million) and Colorado first baseman Todd Helton ($141.5 million).

Santana's average annual salary of $22.92 million is second only to A-Rod's $27.5 million.

AP

Minnesota Twins pitcher Johan Santana delivers a pitch against Cleveland Indians' Casey Blake during a baseball game in this May 17, 2007 file photo, in Cleveland. Santana and the New York Mets completed contract negotiations on Friday, Feb. 1,2008, the last major step needed to finalize the team's blockbuster trade with Minnesota. After the sides were granted an extra two hours to work on a deal, they finished negotiations before the new 7 p.m. EST deadline. The pitcher is scheduled to take a physical, the Mets said.

Among pitchers with multiyear contracts, it topped the $18.3 million of the Chicago Cubs' Carlos Zambrano.

The Twins agreed Tuesday to swap Santana for speedy outfielder Carlos Gomez and right-handers Philip Humber, Kevin Mulvey and Deolis Guerra.

Santana and the Mets were then given until 5 p.m. EST Friday to negotiate a contract. For the deal to become official, the left-hander must formally waive the no-trade provision in his current contract.

Mets officials met with Santana's agent, Peter Greenberg, in Manhattan for the third straight day Friday as the sides worked on a long-term deal.

With talks ongoing, the Mets asked Minnesota for two extra hours to work on an agreement, a request that was granted by the Twins and approved by the commissioner's office.

Without a new deal, Santana, who will turn 29 next month, could have become a free agent after the World Series. Minnesota offered him an $80 million, four-year extension this offseason, but he turned it down.

"I just know he's 29 years old and he's got two Cy Young Awards. I know he's elite," Braves catcher Brian McCann said. "We've got guys who are elite, too. You're going to have to go out and play it out. It's going to be fun."

The Mets also agreed to a $1,025,000, one-year deal with left-handed reliever Pedro Feliciano that avoided an arbitration hearing. A key member of the bullpen, Feliciano was 2-2 with a 3.09 ERA and two saves in 78 appearances last season. He asked for $1.2 million in arbitration and the Mets offered $880,000.

The Mets have three players remaining in arbitration: Perez, right-hander Jorge Sosa and outfielder Ryan Church.

Giants backup sent home after arrest

PHOENIX (AP)—New York Giants backup defensive end Adrian Awasom was arrested on suspicion of drunken driving by Arizona state police early Friday.

An officer with the Arizona Department of Public Safety stopped Awasom's vehicle at about 3 a.m. Friday on Interstate 10 in Phoenix, said Sgt. Tim Mason.

Blood test results aren't yet available, Mason said, but Awasom was cited on suspicion of driving under the influence and extreme DUI and was released.

Awasom, who arrived Thursday for Sunday's Super Bowl, has been on injured reserve since Sept. 18.

Giants spokesman Pat Hanlon said the team was aware of the situation but would not confirm any details.

Awasom was sent home by the team, Hanlon said.

In his third year in the league, Awasom played in the first two games this season, injuring his neck in the second game against Green Bay.

He was signed as a free agent in May 2005 and played in five games that season, mostly on special teams.

Awasom was waived before the start of the 2006 season and then signed to the practice squad. He was signed to the 53-man roster Oct. 26, 2006, and played in 10 games, finishing with 10 tackles, a sack, five quarterback hurries and four special teams tackles.

Woods leads in Dubai

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Tiger Woods managed it all—the wind blowing, the sand swirling and the photographers clicking.

He shot a 1-under-par 71 Friday, making birdies on two of the last three holes for a one-stroke lead halfway through the Dubai Desert Classic. Woods was at 8-under 136, and a victory will give him seven wins in eight starts. He also won in Dubai in 2006.

"It was not a pretty day out there," he said.

Damien McGrane, who is ranked 319th and has never won as a pro, shot a 69 and was a stroke behind. He will be paired with Woods in the third round Saturday at Emirates Golf Club.

"I know he's Irish but that's about it," Woods said.

Gusts reaching 30 mph shook the bunkers and desert terrain. Sand flew in faces and created a haze masking many of the glitzy skyscrapers usually seen towering over the course. Woods wore sunglasses but said he was still "chewing sand all day."

Defending champion Henrik Stenson of Sweden shot a 70 and was two strokes behind Woods. He shared third with Thomas Levet of France, who had a 71.

McGrane now must contend with the large crowds that follow Woods from hole to hole.

"There's a lot of distractions here," Woods told him. "I know there's a policy with cameras, but that's not really happening out here."

Course marshals repeatedly had to ask the galleries watching Woods and his two partners—Colin Montgomerie and Niclas Fasth—to stand still and put their cameras away.

Before he putted at the fourth hole, Woods asked photographers to move out of his playing path. On the sixth hole, Montgomerie's caddie motioned for a spectator to put away his camera—moments after a marshal asked the same thing.

As for McGrane, about a dozen or so fans followed his play, including his sisters. He was tied with Woods at 7 under until the world's No. 1 player birdied the 18th hole. Now they get to play together, and mild weather was expected Saturday—partly sunny and decreasing winds.

"That's our ambition, play alongside him, see how the game is played, see what we should be doing," he said. "Because, obviously, he sets the mark at the moment."

Woods' win at Torrey Pines in San Diego last weekend was his fourth straight and 62nd career title, tying Arnold Palmer for fourth place on the PGA Tour list.

Woods, who led by two strokes after the first round, bogeyed the first hole after driving into the rough. Bogeys followed on the 12th and 15th. He also missed some 10- and 12-foot putts. Poor putting plagued Woods Dubai last year, when he finished third.

"I had a hard time staying steady on them like the rest of the guys," said Woods, who won last week's Buick Invitational by eight strokes. "Plus, also, these greens aren't exactly the easiest greens to read. There's a bit of grain in there and you have to be committed, hit a good stroke and hopefully, it goes in. But didn't make a lot of putts today."

Woods found some benefit from all the flying sand.

"Good thing is, don't need any fiber tonight," he cracked.

For McGrane, who had four birdies and two bogeys, the chill and wind felt more like home.

"Finishing on the last few holes, it was very cold, and you don't expect that in the desert," he said. "But you know, it was nearly my type of weather today, so I made the most of it."

Bryant scores 46 as Lakers beat Raptors

TORONTO (AP)—Kobe Bryant scored 46 points and the Los Angeles Lakers beat the Toronto Raptors 121-101 in the NBA on Friday hours after acquiring Pau Gasol in a trade with the Memphis Grizzlies.

The Lakers gave up Kwame Brown, rookie Javaris Crittenton and two first-round draft picks to get Gasol, who will play center until Andrew Bynum (left knee) is ready to return. Gasol could make his Lakers debut on Sunday against Washington.

Bryant had the crowd gasping with several dunks, including one over Toronto's Carlos Delfino in the second quarter and a one-handed jam in the fourth.

Andrea Bargnani had a season-high 28 to lead Toronto in scoring for the second straight game.

Magic 108, 76ers 106

At Philadelphia, Hedo Turkoglu hit two free throws with 2.4 seconds remaining and finished with 23 points, and Orlando won its third straight game.

Rashard Lewis added 18 points and Dwight Howard had 17 points and 14 rebounds for the Magic, who earned their NBA-best 18th road win while recording their fourth straight victory in Philadelphia.

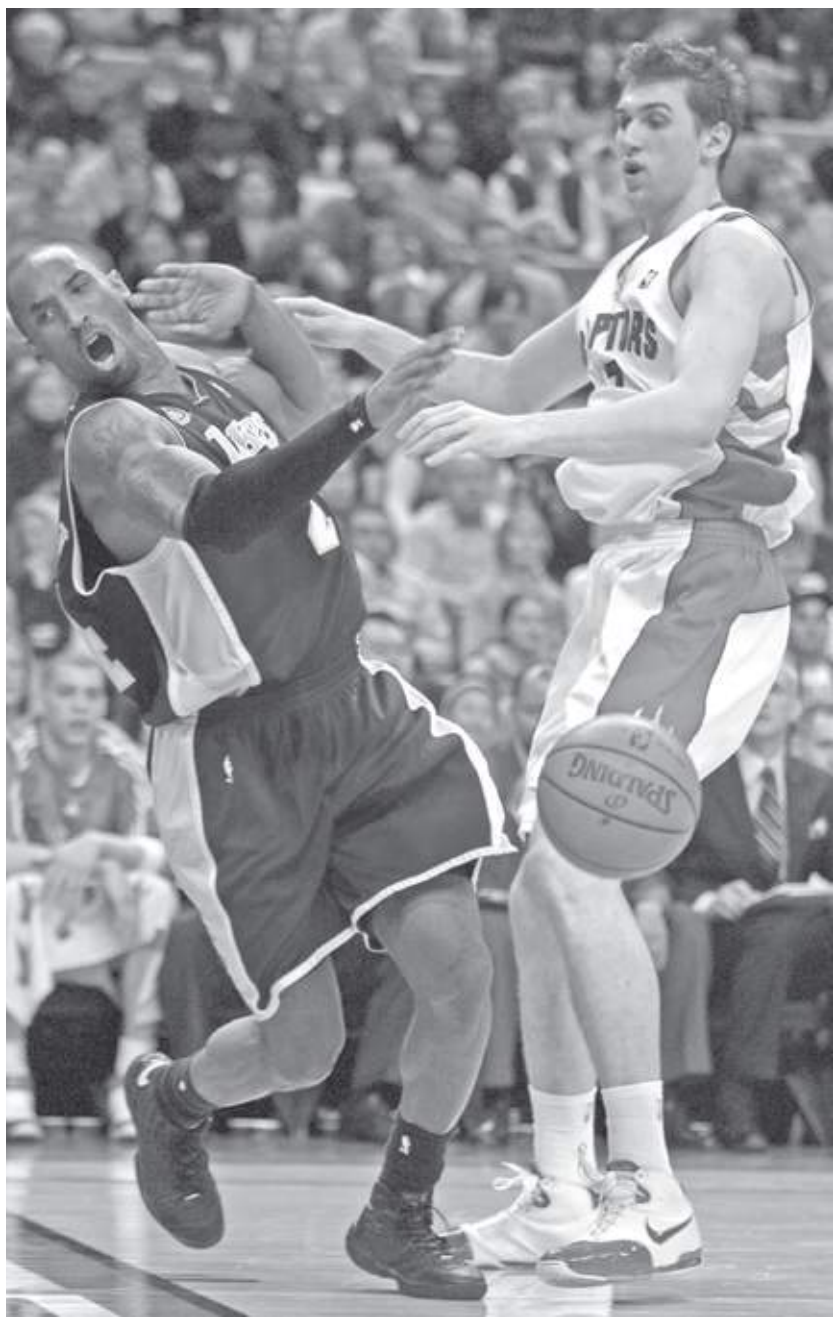
Timberwolves 104, Clippers 83

At Minneapolis, Al Jefferson scored 25 points and grabbed 11 rebounds in three quarters and Craig Smith added 21 points to lead Minnesota,

Nets 94, Heat 85

At Miami, Richard Jefferson scored 25 points, Josh Boone added 15 and New Jersey snapped a seven-game road losing streak.

Vince Carter had 14 points and 11 rebounds, and Jason Kidd finished with 11 points and 12 assists for the Nets.



Los Angeles Lakers forward Kobe Bryant, left, is fouled by Toronto Raptors forward Andrea Bargnani as Bryant drove along the baseline during second-half NBA basketball action in Toronto , Ontario, on Friday Feb.1, 2008.

AP

Rockets 106, Pacers 103

At Indianapolis, rookie Carl Landry scored 13 of his career-high 22 points in the fourth quarter, and Houston won its sixth straight road victory.

Tracy McGrady had 19 points and Yao Ming added 17 and 12 rebounds.

Jazz 96, Wizards 87

At Washington, Mehmet Okur scored 27 points, 19 in the second half, and had 11 rebounds, and Utah won its seventh straight game.

Deron Williams picked up his sixth straight double-double for the Jazz with 11 points and 12 assists.

Blazers 94, Knicks 88 OT

At Portland, Oregon, Brandon Roy had 20 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists a night after being picked for his first All-Star game, and the Portland Trail Blazers beat the New York Knicks 94-88 in overtime.

It was Roy's first career triple-double. Steve Blake added 18 points and LaMarcus Aldridge had 17 points and eight rebounds for Portland, which is 19-5 at the Rose Garden this season.

Warriors 127, Bobcats 86

At Oakland, Calif., Monta Ellis scored 21 points, Stephen Jackson had 19 and the Warriors made Jason Richardson miserable in his return to Golden State with a 127-96 victory over the Charlotte Bobcats.

With new acquisition Chris Webber watching from the bench, the Warriors rolled to a 34-point lead in the third quarter of their ninth win in 12 games.

Kings 112, Hornets 103

At Sacramento, Calif., Ron Artest scored 24 points, Kevin Martin added 22 on his 25th birthday and the Sacramento Kings handed the New Orleans Hornets back-to-back losses for the first time in seven weeks, beating the Western Conference's top team 112-103.

The Hornets had won nine straight games before falling at home to Golden State on Wednesday.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	36	8	.818	
Toronto	25	21	.543	12
New Jersey	20	26	.435	17
Philadelphia	18	29	.383	19 1/2
New York	14	32	.304	23

Southeast Division

Orlando	30	18	.625	
Washington	24	21	.533	4 1/2
Atlanta	18	24	.429	9
Charlotte	18	29	.383	11 1/2
Miami	9	36	.200	19 1/2

Central Division

Detroit	33	13	.717	
Cleveland	25	20	.556	7 1/2
Indiana	19	28	.404	14 1/2
Chicago	18	27	.400	14 1/2
Milwaukee	18	29	.383	15 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

New Orleans	32	14	.696	
Dallas	31	14	.689	1/2
San Antonio	29	16	.644	2 1/2
Houston	26	20	.565	6
Memphis	13	33	.283	19

Northwest Division

Utah	29	18	.617	
Denver	27	18	.600	1
Portland	27	19	.587	1 1/2
Seattle	11	35	.239	17 1/2
Minnesota	10	36	.217	18 1/2

Pacific Division

Phoenix	33	14	.702	
L.A. Lakers	29	16	.644	3
Golden State	29	19	.604	4 1/2
Sacramento	21	24	.467	11
L.A. Clippers	14	29	.326	17

Friday's Games

Houston 106, Indiana 103
Orlando 108, Philadelphia 106
L.A. Lakers 121, Toronto 101
Utah 96, Washington 87
New Jersey 94, Miami 85
Minnesota 104, L.A. Clippers 83
Sacramento 112, New Orleans 103
Portland 94, New York 88, OT
Golden State 127, Charlotte 96°Ë

DUBAI DESERT CLASSIC SCORES

SECOND ROUND

Tiger Woods, United States	65	71	136
Damien McGrane, Ireland	68	69	137
Henrik Stenson, Sweden	68	70	138
Thomas Levet, France	67	71	138
Graeme McDowell, N. Ireland	67	72	139
Scott Hend, Australia	67	72	139
Peter Hedblom, Sweden	69	70	139
Gary Murphy, Ireland	67	72	139
Ross Fisher, England	69	70	139
Sergio Garcia, Spain	68	71	139
Otto Hennie, South Africa	69	70	139
Andrew Coltart, Scotland	69	71	140
Jean-Baptiste Gonnet, France	72	68	140
Ernie Els, South Africa	68	72	140
Soren Hansen, Denmark	68	72	140
Martin Kaymer, Germany	67	73	140
Lee Westwood, England	69	71	140
Robert Karlsson, Sweden	70	70	140
Shiv Kapur, India	68	72	140

By The Associated Press

Lakers acquire Pau Gasol from Grizzlies

TORONTO (AP)—The Los Angeles Lakers bolstered their banged-up frontline Friday with a key acquisition—7-footer Pau Gasol of the Memphis Grizzlies.

"It shows a great deal of commitment from the organization," All-Star Kobe Bryant said before the Lakers' game at Toronto. "It's a great step.

"It's a matter of us just gelling now and putting it together," added Bryant, who urged management to improve the team over the summer. "We've got a great bench. We have a lot of length, a lot of versatility. Now it's time to walk the walk."

The Lakers gave up Kwame Brown, rookie Javaris Crittenton and two first-round draft picks for Gasol. The Spaniard is certain to help a Lakers team reeling from recent injuries to inside players, including blossoming center Andrew Bynum.

"We need a little scoring inside without Andrew Bynum," coach Phil Jackson said. "It gives us a post-up threat right now, and he's a good passer. We like that."

Jackson said Gasol could make his debut when the Lakers visit Washington on Sunday.

"We'd like him to play on Sunday," Jackson said. "I don't know if that's possible or not. He's got to go back to L.A. and have a physical tomorrow."

Gasol, averaging 18.9 points, 8.8 rebounds, 3.0 assists and 1.44 blocked shots in 39 games this season, can fill in at center until Bynum returns in mid-March, then move to power forward.

"He's a great player," forward Lamar Odom said. "With him and Andrew down there, I'm really excited to see how that works out. We'll protect the basket a little bit more. I'm looking forward to seeing those guys playing together."

The Grizzlies will get the Lakers' first-round draft choices in 2008 and 2010; guard Aaron McKie, signed earlier Friday for salary cap purposes; cash considerations, and the rights to Gasol's brother Marc, a 2007 second-round pick of Los Angeles.

"That's something you haven't seen before," Jackson said with a chuckle.

The Lakers also receive the Grizzlies' second-round pick in 2010.

Gasol, the NBA Rookie of the Year in 2002 and an All-Star four years later, has averaged 18.8 points, 8.6 rebounds and 3.1 assists in 476 career games with Memphis. The 27-year-old forward-center, under contract for three more years, is the franchise leader in 12 statistical categories, including points, rebounds and blocks.

But the Grizzlies, 13-33 after finishing with the league's worst record last season, decided to clear salary cap space knowing they aren't in position to win in the next couple of years.

"We're a 13-win team, so when you're in that situation, you've got to make moves," Grizzlies general manager Chris Wallace said. "Brown was the largest expiring contact we could find in the league where we also got back an attractive young player like Crittenton ... and multiple first-round picks."

Gasol was the MVP of the 2006 world championships after helping Spain win the gold medal.

"I have to take my hat off to (owner Jerry) Buss and Mitch for going forward with this," Bryant said. "Now it's up to us to go out there and work hard."

Odom said he feels "the sky is the limit" for the new-look Lakers.

"We felt like we could compete for a championship with the team we had," Odom said. "With this addition, hopefully that dream comes true."

The Lakers were one of the NBA's best teams before the 20-year-old Bynum injured his left knee Jan. 13 against Memphis, coincidentally. Los Angeles had a 28-16 record entering Friday night's game at Toronto but had lost five of eight since Bynum was injured.

Center Chris Mihm has been sidelined with right ankle problems for several weeks; forward Trevor Ariza broke his right foot in practice Jan. 20 and is expected to be out until mid-March, and forward Luke Walton was day-to-day with a right hip pointer. Jackson said Walton would dress Friday but might not play.

Bryant said his first thoughts upon hearing of the trade were for his teammates heading the other way.

"Javaris was like a little brother to me," Bryant said. "I tried to mentor him as much as I could. Kwame, he's been through a lot of ups and downs but he has a great heart."

Brown has been filling in at center since Bynum was injured, but the first overall pick in the draft by Washington in 2001 has been a significant drop-off from Bynum. Brown, earning $9.1 million this season in the final year of his contract, is averaging 5.7 points and 5.7 rebounds in 23 games. He has averaged 7.6 points and 5.7 rebounds in 389 games with the Wizards and Lakers.

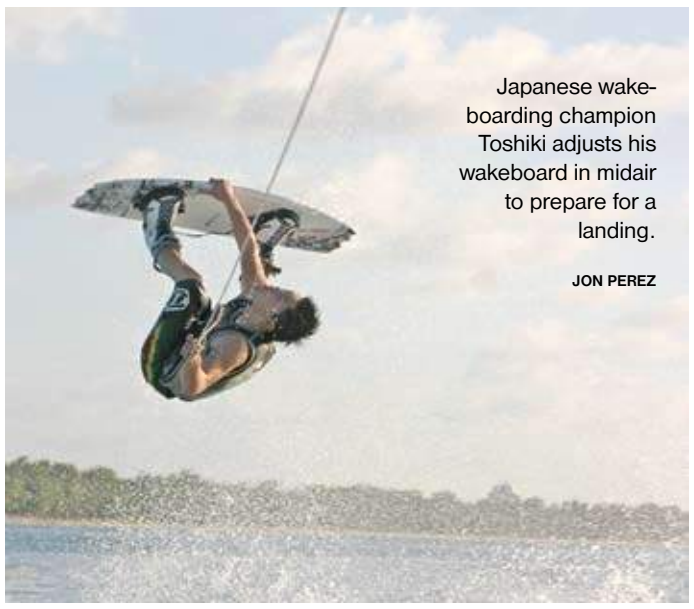
Crittenton, the 19th overall pick in the draft last summer, averaged 3.3 points in 22 games for the Lakers. He was expendable because of the fine play by second-year guard Jordan Farmar as a backup to Derek Fisher. The 20-year-old Crittenton averaged 14.4 points and 5.8 assists as a freshman at Georgia Tech last season.

Marc Gasol, the 48th overall pick in the 2007 draft, is playing for Akasvayu Girona in Spain. The Gasol brothers were members of the Spanish national team in 2006. The younger Gasol is 23 and a 7-1, 280-pounder.

McKie, a 13-year veteran, played in 10 games for the Lakers last season and hasn't played this season. He is expected to be released by the Grizzlies. He has averaged 7.4 points and 2.7 assists for Portland, Detroit, Philadelphia and the Lakers.

The Lakers also signed backup center DJ Mbenga to a second 10-day contract. The 7-footer from the Congo signed his first 10-day contract Jan. 21 and averaged 1.5 points and 1.5 rebounds in four games.

The Week in Sports



Japanese wakeboarding champion Toshiki adjusts his wakeboard in midair to prepare for a landing.

JON PEREZ

JON PEREZ

Japanese wakeboarders, from left, Natsuki, Mizuki, Nati, and Toshiki enjoy a light moment after wakeboarding at the Saipan lagoon.

MARK RABAGO

Raymond Zapanta, right, and Emi Williams show off their winnings after topping the January roll-off of the Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes.

JON PEREZ

The Ol'Aces' Luis Iguel blocks the spike of Menudo's Tyce Mister in their Tuesday night's game in the Men's Winter Indoor Volleyball game at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Wells Fargo starts '08 with a bang

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipan tribune.com
REPORTER

The Wells Fargo Wranglers opened up the 2008 slow-pitch softball season with a bang, winning the 6th Annual CNMI Crime Stoppers Softball Tournament.

The Wranglers, formerly known as No Ka Oi, escaped with a 5-4 win over PTI in the finals thanks to a J.J. Laniyo two-out, RBI single that completed their title defense.

Technically, it was the Wranglers' fifth straight crown since most of its members are from perennial title winner No Ka Oi. It was also Wells Fargo's fourth straight win after going undefeated in the elimination round that earned them the top seeding and first finals berth.

Aside from Wells Fargo and PTI, Shell Marianas, Vox Vodka and Bing Energy Drink of MARPAC, PIC, UMDA, DFS Galleria, and Marianas Cable Vision were the other competing teams.

Fujio Miyachi and Maimi Shimizu won the Inaugural 12-kilometer Marianas Coffee Trail Run while teen wakeboarding sensation Toshiki tested the waters of the Saipan lagoon with three of his friends.

Miyachi and Shimizu bested 31 other runners that challenged the on- and off-road trail run that started from Micro Beach at the American Memorial Park that took runners through a challenging terrain along Saipan's oldest wild coffee trees that still grows along Mt. Tapochao's slopes. The course is almost similar to the Tough Love Mt. Bike Race held last year.

One hour, 23 minutes and 31 seconds later Miyachi found himself back at Micro Beach after completing the grueling 12-km course while Shimizu ruled the women's division with a time of 1:43.49.

Toshiki, meanwhile, frolicked along the Saipan lagoon showcasing his skills and stunts that earned him the title in the 2007 Japan Wakeboarding Championship.

The 15-year-old Toshiki arrived Monday night with friends Nari, who is also a professional wakeboarder at age 14, Natsuki, 12, and Mizuki, 10. They will be spending one week on Saipan and will return to Hyogo Prefecture on Tuesday.

Northern Marianas Swimming Federation president Willem "Bill" Sakovich also accepted the membership fledgling Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center to the CNMI's swimming governing body.

Sakovich relayed the good news in a recent letter to Tsunami Saipan president Stanley Good IV.

JON PEREZ

Members of the Wells Fargo Wranglers celebrate their victory in the 6th Annual CNMI Crime Stoppers Softball Tournament at the Dandan Elementary School Softball Field. They beat PTI, 5-4, in yesterday's finals.

JON PEREZ

J.J. Laniyo of the Wells Fargo Wranglers waits for the throw by PTI pitcher Leo Bobai in yesterday's finals match in the 6th Annual CNMI Crime Stoppers Softball Tournament at the Dandan Elementary School Softball Field.

JON PEREZ

CNMI Crime Stoppers chairman Jim Arenovski, standing left, joins members and supporters of Team Vox and Bing MARPAC after receiving their third place trophy.

JON PEREZ

Members of Team PTI join CNMI Crime Stoppers board members for a group shot in last week's 6th Annual Crime Stoppers Softball Tournament.

JON PEREZ

Vivian Lee watches the direction of her forehand return in her final training session with trainer/coach Lope Padilla yesterday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan tennis courts.

Sakovich, who with his wife Jean founded the SSC more than 30 years ago, said that with Tsunami Saipan becoming the second member of the federation, it will now have to work closely with the more established SSC in the selection of swimmers that would represent the CNMI in off-island competitions.

Local youth netter Vivian Lee left for New Zealand on Thursday to join the SunSmart 18-and-under Canterbury Championships and the Wellington 18-and-under Summer Championships, which are two ITF Grade IV events in Christchurch and Wellington.

The Canterbury Championships, an outdoor hard court event, will run from Feb. 4 to 9 at Scenic Circle Hotels Tennis Center at Wilding Park. After the Canterbury Championships, Lee will head to Wellington to join the Summer Championships from Feb. 11 to 16 at the Renouf Tennis Center at Brooklyn Road, Brooklyn. She is expected to return to Saipan on Feb. 19.

Raymond Zapanta and Emi Williams won the year's first monthly roll-off in the Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes Tournament Monday night at the Saipan Bowling Center.

J.D. Torres claimed the first Prince/Princess of the Lanes Tenpin Bowling Tournament.

Wells Fargo starts '08 with a bang

The Wells Fargo Wranglers opened up the 2008 slow-pitch softball season with a bang winning the 6th Annual CNMI Crime Stoppers Softball Tournament.

27

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Mets, Santana agree to $150.75M contract

Johan Santana is a money pitcher, and the New York Mets are paying for it. Santana and the Mets agreed Friday to a $137.5 million, six-year contract.

25

Rock Steady eclipses Suns in Bud Cup

JON PEREZ

Members of Rock Steady celebrate their 92-78 win over the Saipan Stevedore Suns in Friday night's championship match in the BANMI-Budweiser Cup men's Islandwide Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Rock Steady completed its amazing postseason run in the 2007 BANMI-Budweiser Cup Men's Islandwide Basketball League beating the Saipan Stevedore Suns, 92-78, in Friday night's championship match.

Rock Steady used a 9-0 run early in the fourth quarter as enough cushion to secure the title and their sixth straight win in the CNMI's premier men's cage league at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Rock Steady has not lost dating back from a 92-87 setback against pennant-winner Ol'Aces on Nov. 30. Their six-game winning streak started from a 118-62 crushing of G-Rollers II on Dec. 10.

It was Rock Steady's third straight win over the Suns this season. They beat the Suns during the regular season, 101-91, in overtime on Oct. 28 and made it 2-0 against the Sonny Flores-mentored squad after a 98-90 decision in the second round of the playoffs on Jan. 21.

It was also a back-to-back title win of sorts for Rock Steady after most of its players were members of the CNMI Men's National team that were champions in 2006. The team used the Bud Cup as a tune up for the 6th Micronesian Games, which Saipan hosted in June.

Tied at 62-all in the early minutes of the fourth quarter, a Fred Pelisamen basket touched off that 9-0 spurt as they never looked back after that.

The Suns, however, would not give up without a fight and closed in at 73-68 with 5:02 left in the clock but another 7-0 exchange, highlighted by an alley-hoop pass from Andres "Jhun" Estolas to a high-flying Pelisiman, became Rock Steady's knockout punch time down to 3:07.

The Suns last threatened at 80-73 on Elmer Esdrelon's five straight points, 2:31 left in the clock.

Time, however, was on Rock Steady's side wisely using up the clock while making timely baskets and defensive stops at the other end. They also went 8-for-11 at the free throw line in the final two minutes of the game that helped secure the win.

Rock Steady and the Suns played it close in the first three quarters of the match where neither team led by as much as six points. It was only in the fourth quarter that Rock Steady gained some breathing room as the Suns went scoreless for almost four minutes.

The Suns even held on to a 62-56 lead after the third quarter but could not sustain their momentum in the final period. A win could have extended the finals to a second game tomorrow.

Pelisamen scattered a game-high 32 points to lead Rock Steady's scoring while getting a lot of scoring support from Mark Wallace's 22 points. Estolas and Sivas Awes tallied 14 and 10 markers.

Ed Diaz and Esdrelon paced the Suns with 21 points each while Mendoza, who missed their playoff game against the Sonics on Jan. 30, netted 20 more.

The Suns missed the scoring savvy of the prolific Jawn Joyner and Steve Rasa, who were held to two and eight points each.

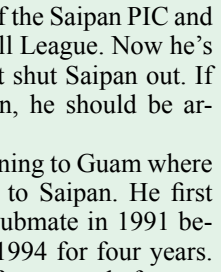
Rock Steady enjoyed a twice-to-beat edge after capturing the first finals berth when they beat the Sonics on Jan. 28. The Suns, meanwhile, scored a 99-81 triumph over the Sonics to secure the second finals spot.

Rock Steady 92—Pelisamen 32, Wallace 22, Estolas 14, Awes 10, Fitial 7, J. Villacrucis 3, Manbisuan 2, Ja. Villacrusis 2.

Saipan Stevedore Suns 78—Diaz 21, Esdrelon 21, Mendoza 20, Rasa 8, Aaron 4, Joyner 2, Palacios 2.

Scoring by quarters: 21-17, 33-39, 62-56, 92-78.

OFF THE BENCH



By BOB COLDEEN

Coldeen is longtime sports journalist in the CNMI and is the sports director of KSPN 2.

Exodus

Saipan lost to Guam. Again. Not in baseball. Not in soccer. Not in a game but in personnel.

This is like the Twins giving away Johan Santana and not getting anything in return.

This is like Raiders giving away Randy Moss to the Patriots for a fourth round draft choice.

This is like the Grizzlies giving away Paul Gasol to the Lakers for a few large slabs of meat.

Jon Cramer is leaving Saipan to work on Guam. Why? They gave him an offer he couldn't refuse. It's not that he doesn't want to stay on Saipan where he loves working. It's because it's the best thing for his family and he's a family guy. And unlike Saipan, he can own a house on Guam.

ITES. It's the Economy, Stupid. Guam is the New York Yankees compared to Saipan which is the Kansas City Royals. And Bart Jackson, the General Manager of the Guam Pacific Islands, is George Steinbrenner.

Bart used to be the GM of the Saipan PIC and pitched in the Palau Softball League. Now he's pitching for Guam and just shut Saipan out. If Bart comes back to Saipan, he should be arrested for stealing.

Actually, Cramer is returning to Guam where he worked before coming to Saipan. He first came to Guam as a PIC clubmate in 1991 before moving to Saipan in 1994 for four years. He then worked on Maui for a year before returning to his senses and Saipan.

Cramer has been a fixture on the Saipan sports scene since 1999.

Quick: Who is the number one beach volleyball player in the world today? Easy, it's Phil Dalhauser. The only reason I know that is because of Cramer who single-handedly made beach volleyball a popular sport here. Dalhauser is coming back to Saipan this month for the fourth year. Only on Saipan do players have a chance to have Dalhauser as their teammate in a cash-prize tournament. The Marianas Cup is one of the most exciting and fun sports weekends on Saipan, thanks to Cramer.

This month, for the first time ever, there's a beach volleyball tournament on Managaha which has the best beach in Micronesia for playing volleyball. Cramer's idea.

Thanks to Cramer, the CNMI won a gold and silver medal in beach volleyball in the 2006 Micronesian Games. Without Cramer, the sport would not have been included.

Cramer as president of the NMI Volleyball Association resurrected the indoor men's and women's leagues. He also started the PIC Thanksgiving Softball Tournament, managed softball and little league teams. And he helped create the Sportsfest, turning the XTERRA and Tagaman triathlons into a swimming/biking/running lovefest that attracts top professionals from around the world. And then there are his famous horseshoe tournaments.

Cramer has done as much to promote local sports as anyone over the last ten years. His departure next month is part of the brain drain that the CNMI is experiencing during our depression. Saipan's loss is Guam's gain. I am depressed.

'NMSF membership a boost to NMI swimming'

By MARK RABAGO
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Swimming Center Tsunami Saipan president Stanley Good IV believes his club's membership in the Northern Marianas Swimming Federation is a boost to the sport.

Last week, Good and the club received a letter from NMSF president Bill Sakovich informing them that their application to be a member of the governing body for the sport of swimming in the CNMI has been granted.

"I think it benefits swimming overall. For instance, for large international events the CNMI can now send the fastest swimmers from both teams. This creates a competitive atmosphere, where one team does not decide who gets to go and who doesn't. Both must now compete for the privilege of representing the CNMI," he said in an email to the *Saipan Tribune*.

Good added that Tsunami Saipan currently has 26 swimmers, and if you add swimmers from the more established Saipan Swim Club, it effectively gives the Commonwealth more than a 50-swimmer pool to choose from and send to competitions like the Pacific Games, Micronesian Games, and other off-island meets.

He, however, didn't deny Tsunami Saipan stands more to benefit from the recent development than SSC, which used to be the lone member of the NMSF.

"It's definitely a big boost for our swim team. This gives us equal footing with the Saipan Swim Club for all swimming events that represent the CNMI. We are equally eligible for FINA funding for off-island swim meets, our swimmers can compete on behalf of the CNMI in international meets and any local record our swimmers break will count as CNMI records for swimming," he said.

In addition, both teams should now arrive at a consensus as to whom to nominate in the athlete of the month awards of the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Associaiton.

Good went on to say that next month Sakovich will fly to Saipan to help with the 2008 Saipan Sportsfest. During his stay, the NMSF president and longtime CNMI resident will convene a joint meeting of both teams and SSC and Tsunami Saipan will have to elect a new board of directors for the NMSF.

"This Board will represent both teams at NMASA meetings and determine FINA funding for the international events," said Good.